Edward Petre.

15772/c

81462

TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER THE

SOURCE OF THE NILE,

In the Years 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, and 1773.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

BY JAMES BRUCE OF KINNAIRD, ESQ. F.R.S.

VOL. II.

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi, sed omnes illachrymabiles
Urgentur ignotique longâ
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro. HORAT.

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From 1268 to 1283.

Line of Solomon reſtored under this Prince—He continues the Royal Reſidence in Shoa—Tecla Haimanout dies—Reaſons for the Fabrication of the ſuppoſed Nicene Canon.

ALTHOUGH the multiplicity of names aſſumed by the kings of Abyſſinia, and the confuſion occaſioned by this cuſtom, has more than once been complained of in the foregoing ſheets, we have here a prince that is an exception

to this practice, otherwiſe almoſt general. Icon Amlac is the only name by which we know this firſt prince of the race of Solomon, reſtored now fully to his dominions, after a long exile his family had ſuffered by the treaſon of Judith. The ſignification of his name is, "Let him be made our ſovereign," and is apparently that which he took upon his inauguration or acceſſion to the throne; and his name of baptiſm, and bye-name or popular name given him, are both therefore loſt.

Although now reſtored to the complete poſſeſſion of his ancient dominions, he was too wiſe all at once to leave his dutiful kingdom of Shoa and return to Tigré. He continued to make Tegulat, the capital of Shoa, his ſeat of the empire, and there reigned fifteen years.

In the 14th year of the reign of this prince, his great benefactor, Abuna Tecla Haimanout, founder of the Order of Monks of Debra Libanos, and reſtorer of the Royal family, died at that monaſtery in great reputation and very advanced age. He was the laſt Abyſſinian ordained Abuna; and this ſufficiently ſhews the date of that canon I have already ſpoken of, falſely ſaid to be a canon of the council of Nicea.

Though Le Grande and ſome others have pretended to be in doubt at what time, and for what reaſon, this canon could have been made, I think the reaſon very plain, which fixes it to the time of Tecla Haimanout, as well as ſhews it to be a forgery of the church of Alexandria, no doubt with the council and advice of this great ſtateſman Tecla Haimanout. Egypt was fallen under the dominion of the

Saracens; the Coptic patriarch, and all the Chriſtians of the church of Alexandria, were their ſlaves or ſervants; but the Abyſſinians were free and independent, both in church and ſtate, and a mortal hatred had followed the conqueſt from variety of cauſes, of which the perſecution of the Chriſtians in Egypt was not one of the leaſt. As it was probable that theſe reaſons would increaſe daily, the conſequence which promiſed inevitably to follow was, that the Abyſſinians would not apply to Alexandria, or Cairo, for a metropolitan ſent by the Mahometans, but would chooſe a head of their own, and ſo become independent altogether of the chair of St Mark. As they were cut off from the reſt of the world by ſeas and deſerts almoſt inacceſſible, as they wanted books, and were every day relaxing in diſcipline, total ignorance was likely to follow their ſeparation from their primitive church, and this could not end but in a relapſe into Paganiſm, or in their embracing the religion of Mahomet.

This prohibition of making any of their countrymen Abuna, ſecured them always a foreigner, and a man of foreign education and attachments, to fill the place of Abuna, and by this means aſſured the dependence of the Abyſſinians upon the patriarch of Alexandria. This is what I judge probable, for I have already invincibly ſhewn, that it is impoſſible this canon could be one of the firſt general Council; and its being in Arabic, and conceived in very barbarous terms, ſufficiently evinces that it was forged at this period.

IGBA SION.

From 1283 to 1312.

Quick Succeſſion of Princes—Memoirs of theſe Reigns deficient.

TO Icon Amlac ſucceeded Igba Sion, and after him five other princes, his brothers, Bahar Segued, Tzenaf Segued, Jan Segued, Haſeb Araad, and Kedem Segued, all in five years. So quick a ſucceſſion in ſo few years ſeems to mark very unſettled times. Whether it was a civil war among themſelves that brought theſe reigns to ſo ſpeedy a concluſion, or whether it was that the Mooriſh ſtates in Adel had grown in power, and fought ſucceſsfully againſt them, we do not know. One thing only we are certain of, that no moleſtation was offered by the late royal family of Laſta, who continued in peace, and firm in the obſervation of their treaty. I therefore am inclined to think, that a civil war among the brothers was the occaſion of the quick ſucceſſion of ſo many princes; and that in the time when the kingdom was weakened by this calamity, the ſtates of Adel, grown rich and powerful, had improved the occaſion, and ſeized upon all that territory from Azab to Melinda, and cut off the Abyſſinians entirely from the ſea-coaſt, and from an opportunity of trading directly with India from the ports ſituated upon the ocean. And my reaſon is, that, in a reign which ſpeedily follows, we find the kingdom of

Adel

Adel increaſed greatly in power, and Mooriſh princes from Arabia eſtabliſhed in little principalities, exactly correſponding with the ſouthern limits of Abyſſinia, and placed between them and the ocean; and we ſee, at the ſame time, a rancour and hatred firmly rooted in the breaſts of both nations, one of the cauſes of which is conſtantly alledged by the Abyſſinian princes to be, that the Moors of Adel were anciently their ſubjects and vaſſals, had withdrawn themſelves from their allegiance, and owed their preſent independence to rebellion only.

To theſe princes ſucceeded Wedem Araad, their youngeſt brother, who reigned fifteen years, probably in peace, for in this ſtate we find the kingdom in the days of his ſucceſſor; but then it is ſuch a peace that we ſee it only wanted any ſort of provocation from one party to the other, for both to break out into very cruel, long, and bloody wars.

AMDA SION.

From 1312 to 1342.

Licentious beginning of this King's Reign—His rigorous Conduct with the Monks of Debra Libanos—His Mahometan Subjects rebel—Mara and Adel declare War—Are defeated in ſeveral Battles, and ſubmit.

AMDA Sion ſucceeded his father, Wedem Araad, who was youngeſt brother of Icon Amlac, and came to the crown upon the death of his uncles. He is generally known by

by this his inauguration name; his Chriſtian name was Guebra Maſcal. His reign began with a ſcene as diſgraceful to the name of Chriſtian as it was new in the annals of Ethiopia, and which promiſed a character very different from what this prince preſerved ever afterwards. He had for a time, it ſeems, privately loved a concubine of his father, but had now taken her to live with him publicly; and, not content with committing this ſort of inceſt, he, in a very little time after, had ſeduced his two ſiſters.

Tegulat * (the capital of Shoa) was then the royal reſidence; and near it the monaſtery of Debra Libanos, founded by Tecla Haimanout reſtorer of the line of Solomon. To this monaſtery many men, eminent for learning and religion, had retired from the ſcenes of war that deſolated Paleſtine and Egypt. Among the number of theſe was one Honorius, a Monk of the firſt character for piety, who, ſince, has been canonized as a ſaint. Honorius thought it his duty firſt to admoniſh, and then publicly excommunicate the king for theſe crimes.

It ſhould ſeem that patience was as little among this prince's virtues as chaſtity, as he immediately ordered Honorius to be apprehended, ſtripped naked, and ſeverely whipped through every ſtreet of his capital. That ſame night the town took fire, and was entirely conſumed, and the clergy loſt no time to perſuade the people, that it was the blood of Honorius that turned to fire whenever it had dropt upon the ground, and ſo had burnt the city. The king,

* The city of Wolves, or Hyænas.

king, perhaps better informed, thought otherwiſe of this, and ſuppoſed the burning of his capital was owing to the Monks themſelves. He therefore baniſhed thoſe of Debra Libanos out of the province of Shoa. The mountain of Geſhen had been choſen for the priſon wherein to guard the princes of the male-line of the race of Solomon, after the maſſacre by Eſther *, upon the rock Damo in Tigré.

Geshen is a very ſteep and high rock, in the kingdom of Amhara, adjoining to, and under the juriſdiction of Shoa. Hither the king ſent Philip the Itchegué, chief of the monaſtery of Debra Libanos, and he ſcattered the reſt through Dembea, Tigré, and Begemder,(whoſe inhabitants were moſtly Pagans and Jews), where they greatly propagated the knowledge of the Chriſtian religion.

This inſtance of ſeverity in the king had the effect to make all ranks of people return to their duty; and all talk of Honorius and his miracles was dropt. The town was rebuilt ſpeedily, more magnificently than ever, and Amda Sion found time to turn his thoughts to correct thoſe abuſes, to efface the unfavourable impreſſion which they had made upon the minds of his people at home, and which, beſides, had gained conſiderable ground abroad.

It has been before mentioned, and will be further inculcated in the courſe of this hiſtory as a fact, without the remembrance of which the military expeditions of Abyſſinia cannot be well underſtood, that two oppoſite ſeaſons prevail

* She had ſeveral names, as I have before ſaid, *Judith* in Tigré, and in Amhara *Eſther*.

prevail in countries ſeparated by a line almoſt imperceptible; that during our European winter months, that is, from October to March, the winter or rainy ſeaſon prevails on the coaſt of the ocean and Red Sea, but that theſe rains do not fall in our ſummer, (the rainy ſeaſon in Abyſſinia), which was the reaſon why Amda Sion ſaid to his mutinous troops, he would lead them to Adel or Auſſa, where it did not rain, as we ſhall preſently obſerve.

The different nations that dwell along the coaſt, both of the Red Sea and of the ocean, live in fixed huts or houſes. We ſhall begin at the northmoſt, or neareſt Atbara. The firſt is Ageeg, ſo named from a ſmall iſland on the coaſt, oppoſite to the mountains of the Habab, Agag, or Agaazi, the principal diſtrict of the noble or governing Shepherds, as is before fully explained, different in colour and hair from the Shepherds of the Thebaid living to the northward. Then follow the different tribes of theſe, Tora, Shiho, Taltal, Azimo, and Azabo, where the Red Sea turns eaſtward, towards the Straits, all woolly-headed, the primitive carriers of Saba, and the perfume and gold country. Then various nations inhabit along the ocean, all native blacks, remnants of the Cuſhite Troglodyte, but who do not change their habitations with the ſeaſons, but live within land in caves, and ſome of them now in houſes.

In Adel and Auſſa the inhabitants are tawny, and not black, and have long hair; they are called Gibbertis, which ſome French writers of voyages into this country ſay, mean Slaves, from Guebra, the Abyſſinian word for ſlave or ſervant. But as it would be very particular that a nation like theſe, ſo rich and ſo powerful, who have made themſelves

independent of their ancient maſters the Abyſſinians, have wreſted ſo many provinces from them, and, from the difference of their faith, hold them in ſuch utter contempt, ſhould nevertheleſs be content to call themſelves their ſlaves, ſo nothing is more true, than that this name of Gibberti has a very different import. Jabber, in Arabic, the word from which it is derived, ſignifies the *faith*, or the *true faith*; and Gibberti conſequently means the *faithful*, or the *orthodox*, by which name of *honour* theſe moors, inhabiting the low country of Abyſſinia, call each other, as being conſtant in their faith amidſt Chriſtians with whom they are at perpetual war.

THERE is no current coin in Abyſſinia. Gold is paid by weight; all the revenues are chiefly paid in kind, viz. oxen, ſheep, and honey, which are the greateſt neceſſaries of life. As for luxuries, they are obtained by a barter of gold, myrrh, coffee, elephants teeth, and a variety of other articles which are carried over to Arabia; and in exchange for theſe is brought back whatever is commiſſioned.

EVERY great man in Abyſſinia has one of theſe Gibbertis for his factor. The king has many, who are commonly the ſhrewdeſt and moſt intelligent of their profeſſion. Theſe were the firſt inhabitants of Abyſſinia, whom commerce connected with the Arabians on the other ſide of the Straits of Babelmandeb, with whom they intermarry, or with one another, which preſerves their colour and features, reſembling both the Abyſſinians and Arabians. In Arabia, they are under the protection of ſome of their own countrymen, who being ſold when young as ſlaves, are brought up in the Mahometan religion, and enjoy all the principal poſts

under the Sherriffe of Mecca and the Arabian princes. Theſe are the people who at particular times have appeared in Europe, and who have been ſtraightway taken for, and treated as Ambaſſadors.

More ſouthward and weſtward are the kingdoms of Mara, Worgla, and Pagoma, ſmall principalities of fixed habitations by the ſea, at times free, at others dependent upon Adel; and, to the ſouth of theſe, in the ſame flat country, is Hadea, whoſe capital is Harar, and governed by a prince, who is a Gibberti likewiſe; and who, by marrying a Sherriffa, or female deſcendant of Mahomet, is now reckoned a Sherriffe or noble of Mahomet's family, diſtinguiſhed by his wearing habits, for the moſt part green, and above all a graſs-green turban, a mark of hatred to Chriſtianity.

The Gibbertis, then, are the princes and merchants of this country, converted to the Mahometan faith ſoon after the death of Mahomet, when the Baharnagaſh (as we have already ſtated) revolted from the empire of the Abyſſinians, in whoſe hands all the riches of the country are centered. The black inhabitants are only their ſubjects, hewers of wood and drawers of water, who ſerve them in their families at home, take care of their camels when employed in caravans abroad, and who make the principal part of their forces in the field.

But there are other inhabitants ſtill beſides theſe Gibbertis and native blacks, whom we muſt not confound with the indigenous of this country, how much ſoever they may reſemble them. The firſt of theſe are by the Portugueſe hiſtorians called *Moors*, who are merchants from the weſt of Africa.

Africa. Many of theſe, expelled from Spain by Ferdinand and Iſabella, fixed their reſidence here, and were afterwards joined by others of their Mooriſh brethren, either exiles from Spain, or inhabitants of Morocco, whom the deſire of commerce induced firſt to ſettle in Arabia, till the great oppreſſions that followed the conqueſt of Egypt and Arabia, under Selim and Soliman, interrupted their trade, and ſcattered them here along the coaſt. Theſe are the Moors that Vaſques de Gama* met at Mombaza, Magadoxa, and Melinda; at all places, but the laſt of which, they endeavoured to betray him. Theſe alſo were the Moors that he found in India, having no profeſſion but trade, in every ſpecies of which they excelled.

The fourth ſort are Arabian merchants, who come over occaſionally to recover their debts, and renew correſpondences with the merchants of this country. Theſe are the richeſt of all, and are the bankers of the Gibbertis, who furniſh them funds and merchandiſe, with which they carry on a moſt lucrative and extenſive trade into the heart of Africa, through all the mountains of Abyſſinia to the weſtern ſea, and through countries which are inacceſſible to camels, where the aſs, the mule, and, in ſome places, oxen, are the only beaſts uſed in carriage.

There is a fifth ſort, almoſt below notice, unleſs it is for the miſchief they have conſtantly done their country; they are the Abyſſinian apoſtates from Chriſtianity, the moſt inveterate enemies it has, and who are employed chiefly as ſoldiers. While in that country they are not much eſteem-

* Conquetes de Portugais par Lafitan, vol. 1. liv. ii. p. 90. Id. ibid. p. 144.

ed, though, when tranſported to India, they have conſtantly turned out men of confidence and truſt, and the beſt troops thoſe eaſtern nations have.

There is a ſixth, ſtill leſs in number than even theſe, and not known on this Continent till a few years before. Theſe were the Turks who came from Greece and Syria, and who were under Selim, and Soliman his ſon, the inſtruments of the conqueſt of Egypt and Arabia; ſmall garriſons of whom were everywhere left by the Turks in all the fortreſſes and conſiderable towns they conquered. They are an hereditary kind of militia, who, marrying each others daughters, or with the women of the country, continue from father to ſon to receive from Conſtantinople the ſame pay their forefathers had from Selim. Theſe, though degenerate in figure and manners into an exact reſemblance to the natives of the countries in which they ſince lived, do ſtill continue to maintain their ſuperiority by a conſtant ſkill and attention to fire-arms, which were, at the time of their firſt appearance here, little known or in uſe among either Abyſſinians or Arabians, and the means of firſt eſtabliſhing this preference.

It has been already obſerved, that the Mahometan Moors and Arabs poſſeſſed all the low country on the Indian Ocean, and oppoſite to Arabia Felix; and being, by their religion, obliged to go in pilgrimage to Mecca, as alſo by their ſole profeſſion, which was trade, they became, by conſequence, the only carriers and directors of the commerce of Abyſſinia. All the country to the eaſt and north of Shoa was poſſeſſed and commanded chiefly by Mahometan merchants appointed

appointed by the king; and they had eſtabliſhed a variety of marts or fairs from Ifat, all the way as far as Adel.

ADEL and Mara were two of the moſt powerful kingdoms which lie on the Indian Ocean; and, being conſtantly ſupported by ſoldiers from Arabia, were the firſt to withdraw themſelves from obedience to the king of Abyſſinia, and ſeldom paid their tribute unleſs when the prince came to raiſe it there with an army. Ifat, Fatigar, and Dawaro, were indeed originally Chriſtian provinces; but, in weak reigns, having been ceded to Mooriſh governors for ſums of money, they, by degrees, renounced both their religion and allegiance.

FROM what has been obſerved, the reader will conceive, that where it is ſaid the king, from his capital in Shoa, marched down into Dawaro, Hadea, or Adel, that he then deſcended from the higheſt mountains down to the flat country on the level with the ſea. That this country, from Hadea to Dawaro, having been the ſeat of war for ages, was, partly by the ſoldier for the uſe of the camp, partly by the huſbandman for the neceſſaries of life, cleared of wood, where the water ſtood conſtantly in pools throughout the year; and, being all compoſed of fat black earth, which the torrents bring down from the rainy country of Abyſſinia, was ſown with millet and different kinds of grain in the drieſt ground, while, nearer the mountains, they paſtured numerous herds of cattle. Notwithſtanding, however, the country was poſſeſſed of theſe advantages, the climate was intenſely hot, feveriſh, and unhealthy, and, for the moſt part, from theſe circumſtances, fatal to ſtrangers, and hated by the Abyſſinians.

AGAIN,

AGAIN, when it is ſaid that the king had marched to Samhar, it is meant that he had paſſed this fruitful country, and is come to that part of the zone, or belt, (neareſt the ſea) compoſed of gravel; which, though it enjoys neither the water nor the fruitfulneſs of the black earth, is in a great meaſure free from its attendant diſeaſes, and here the cities and towns are placed, while the crop, oxen, and cattle, are in the cultivated part near the mountains, which in the language of the country is called *Mazaga*, ſignifying *black mould*.

LASTLY, when he hears the army murmuring at being kept during the rainy ſeaſon in the Kolla below, he is to remember, that all was cool, pleaſant, and ſafe in Upper Abyſſinia. The ſoldiers, therefore, languiſhed for the enjoyment of their own families, without any other occupation but merriment, feſtivity, and every ſpecies of gratification that wine, and the free and uncontrouled ſociety of the female-ſex, could produce.

HAVING now ſufficiently explained and deſcribed the various names and inhabitants, the ſituation, ſoil, and climate of thoſe provinces about to be the theatre of the war, I ſhall proceed to declare the occaſion of it, which was nothing more than the fruit of thoſe prejudices which, I have already ſaid, the looſe behaviour of the king in the beginning of his reign had produced among his neighbours, and the calamities which had enfeebled the kingdom in the preceding reigns.

IT happened that one of thoſe Mooriſh factors, whom I have already deſcribed, having in charge the commercial

 intereſts

intereſts of the king, had been aſſaſſinated and robbed in the province of Ifat, when the King was buſied with Honorius and his Monks. Without complaining or expoſtulating, he ſuddenly aſſembled his troops, having ordered them to rendezvous at Shugura upon the frontiers, and, to ſhew his impatience for revenge, with ſeven * horſemen he fell upon the neareſt Mahometan ſettlements, who were perfectly ſecure, and put all he found in his way to the ſword without exception. Then placing himſelf at the head of his army, he marched, by a long day's journey, ſtraight to Ifat, burning Hungura, Jadai, Kubat, Fadiſe, Caliſe, and Argai, towns that lye in the way, full of all ſorts of valuable merchandiſe, and, finding no where a force aſſembled to oppoſe him, he divided his army into ſmall detachments, ſending them different ways, with orders to lay the whole countries, where they came, waſte with fire and ſword, while he himſelf remained in the camp to guard the ſpoil, the women, and the baggage.

The Moors, aſtoniſhed at this torrent of deſolation, which ſo ſuddenly had broken out under a prince whom they had conſidered as immerſed in pleaſure, flew all to arms; and being informed that the king was alone, and ſcarcely had ſoldiers to guard his camp, they aſſembled in numbers under the command of Hak-eddin, governor of Ifat, who had before plundered and murdered the king's ſervant. They then determined to attack Amda Sion early in the morning, but luckily two of his detachments had returned to the camp to his aſſiſtance, and joined him the very night before.

It

* It has been imagined that this number ſhould be increaſed to ſeventy, but I have followed the text; there would be little difference in the raſhneſs of the action.

It was ſcarcely day when the Moors preſented themſelves; but, far from ſurpriſing the Abyſſinians buried in ſleep, they found the king with his army ranged in battle, who, without giving them time to recover from their ſurpriſe, attacked them in perſon with great fury; and ſingling out Derdar, brother to Hak-eddin, animating his men before the ranks, he ſtruck him ſo violently with his lance that he fell dead among his horſe's feet, in the ſight of both armies; whilſt the Abyſſinian troops preſſing every where briſkly forward, the Moors took to flight, and were purſued with great ſlaughter into the woods and faſtneſſes.

After this victory, the king ordered his troops to build huts for themſelves, at leaſt ſuch as could not find houſes ready built. He ordered, likewiſe, a great tract of land contiguous to be plowed and ſown, meaning to intimate, that his intention was to ſtay there with his army all the rainy ſeaſon.

The Mahometans, from this meaſure, if it ſhould be carried into execution, ſaw nothing but total extirpation before their eyes; they, therefore, with one conſent, ſubmitted to the tribute impoſed upon them; and the king having removed Hak-eddin, placed his brother Saber-eddin in his ſtead, and the rainy ſeaſon being now begun, diſmiſſed his army, and returned to Tegulat in Shoa.

Though the perſonal gallantry of the king was a quality ſufficient of itſelf to make him a favourite of the ſoldiers, his liberality was not leſs; all the plunder got by his troops in the field was faithfully divided among thoſe who had fought for him; nor did he ever pretend to a ſhare himſelf,

ſelf, unleſs on occaſions when he was engaged in perſon, and then he ſhared upon an equal footing with the principal officers.

When returned to the capital, he ſhewed the ſame diſintereſtedneſs and generoſity which he had done in the field, and he diſtributed all he had won for his ſhare among the great men, whom the neceſſary duties of government had obliged to remain at home, as alſo amongſt the poor, and prieſts for the maintenance of churches; and, as well by this, as by his zeal and activity againſt the enemies of Chriſtianity, he became the greateſt favourite of all ranks of the clergy, notwithſtanding the unpromiſing appearances at the beginning of his reign.

The rainy ſeaſon in Abyſſinia generally puts an end to the active part of war, as every one retires then to towns and villages to ſcreen themſelves from the inclemency of the climate, deluged now with daily rain. The ſoldier, the huſbandman, and, above all, the women, dedicate this ſeaſon to continued feſtivity and riot. Theſe villages and towns are always placed upon the higheſt mountains. The valleys that intervene are ſoon divided by large and rapid torrents. Every hollow foot-path becomes a ſtream, and the valleys between the hills become ſo miry as not to bear horſe; and the waters, both deep and violent, are too apt to ſhift their direction to ſuffer any one on foot to paſs ſafely. All this ſeaſon, and this alone, people ſleep in their houſes in ſafety; their lances and ſhields are hung up on the ſides of their hall, and their ſaddles and bridles taken off their horſes; for in Abyſſinia, at other times, the horſes are always bridled, and are accuſtomed to eat and drink with this

incumbrance. It is not, indeed, the ſame ſort of bridle they uſe in the field, but a ſmall bit of iron like our hunting-bridles, on purpoſe merely to preſerve them in this habit. The court, and the principal officers of government, retire to the capital, and there adminiſter juſtice, make alliances, and prepare the neceſſary funds and armaments, which the preſent exigencies of the ſtate require on the return of fair weather.

Amda Sion was no ſooner returned to Tegulat, than the Moors again entered into a conſpiracy againſt him. The principal were Amano king of Hadea, Saber-eddin, whom the king had made governor of Fatigar, and privately, without any open declaration, Gimmel-eddin governor in Dawaro. But this conſpiracy could not be hid from a prince of Amda Sion's vigilance and penetration. He concealed, however, any knowledge of the matter, leſt it ſhould urge the Moors to commence hoſtilities too early. He continued, therefore, with diligence, and without oſtentation of any particular deſign, to make the ordinary preparations to take the field on the approaching ſeaſon. This, however, did not impoſe upon the enemy. Whether from intelligence, or impatience of being longer inactive, Saber-eddin began the firſt hoſtilities, by ſurpriſing ſome Chriſtian villages, and plundering and ſetting fire to the churches before the rains had yet entirely ceaſed.

Thoſe that have written accounts of Abyſſinia ſeem to agree in extolling the people of that country for giving no belief to the exiſtence or reality of witchcraft or ſorcery. Why they have fixed on this particular nation is hard to determine. But, as for me, I have no doubt in aſſerting, that there is not a barbarous or ignorant people that I ever knew of which this

this can be truly ſaid; but certainly it never was leſs true than when ſaid of Abyſſinians. There is ſcarce a monk in any lonely monaſtery, (ſuch as thoſe in the hot and unwholeſome valley of Waldubba), not a hermit of the many upon the mountains, not an old prieſt who has lived any time ſequeſtered from ſociety, that does not pretend to poſſeſs charms offenſive and defenſive, and ſeveral methods by which he can, at will, look into futurity. The Moors are all, to a man, perſuaded of this: their arms and necks are loaded with amulets againſt witchcraft. Their women are believed to have all the miſchievous powers of faſcination; and both ſexes a hundred ſecrets of divination. The Falaſha are addicted to this in ſtill a greater degree, if poſſible. It is always believed by every individual Abyſſinian, that the number of hyænas the ſmell of carrion brings into the city of Gondar every night, are the Falaſha from the neighbouring mountains, transformed by the effect and for the purpoſes of inchantment. Even the Galla, a barbarous and ſtranger nation, hoſtile to the Abyſſinians, and differing in language and religion, ſtill agree with them in a hearty belief of the poſſibility of practiſing witchcraft, ſo as to occaſion ſickneſs and death at a very great diſtance, to blaſt the harveſts, poiſon the waters, and render people incapable of propagating their ſpecies.

AMANO, king of Hadea, had one of theſe conjurers, who, by his knowledge of futurity, was famous among all the Mahometans of the low country. The king of Hadea himſelf had gone no further than to determine to rebel; but whether he was to go up to fight with Amda Sion in Shoa, or whether greater ſucceſs would attend his expecting him in Hadea, this was thought a doubt wholly with-

in the province of the conjurer, who aſſured Amano, his maſter, that if he did remain below, and wait for Amda Sion in Hadea, that prince would come down to him, and in one battle loſe his kingdom and his life.

THE king, whoſe principal view was to prevent the conjunction of the confederates, and, if poſſible, to fight them ſeparately, did not ſtay till his whole army was aſſembled, but, as ſoon as he got together a body of troops ſufficient to make head againſt any one of the rebels, he ſent that body immediately on the ſervice it was deſtined for, in order to diſappoint the general combination.

A LARGE number of horſe and foot (whoſe poſt was in the van of the royal army when the king marched at the head of it) was the firſt ready, and, without delay, was ſent againſt Amano into Hadea, under the command of the general of the cavalry. This officer executed the ſervice on which he was ſent with the greateſt diligence poſſible, having the beſt horſes, and ſtrongeſt and moſt active men in the army; by long marches, he came upon the king of Hadea, ſurpriſed him before his troops were all aſſembled, gave him an entire defeat, and made him priſoner. However ill the conjurer had provided for the king's ſafety, he ſeems to have been more attentive to his own; great ſearch was made for him by order of Amda Sion, but he was not to be found, having very early, upon the firſt ſight of the king's troops, fled and hid himſelf in Ifat.

THE next detachment was ſent againſt Saber-eddin in Fatigar. The governor of Amhara commanded this, with orders

orders to lay the whole country waſte, and by all means provoke Saber-eddin to riſk a battle, either before or after the junction of the troops which were to march thither from Hadea. But when the king was thus buſy with the Moors, news were brought him that the Falaſha had rebelled, and were in arms, in very great numbers. The king ordered Tzaga Chriſtos, governor of Begemder, to aſſemble his troops with thoſe of Gondar, Sacalta, and Damot, and march againſt theſe rebels before they had time to ruin the country; and having thus made proviſion againſt all his enemies, Amda Sion proceeded with the remainder of his army to Dawaro.

Hydar was governor in this province for the king, who, though he ſhewed outwardly every appearance of duty and fidelity, was, notwithſtanding, deep in the conſpiracy with Saber-eddin, and had cloſe correſpondence with the king of Adel, whoſe capital, Auſſa, was not at a great diſtance from him.

The king kept his Eaſter at Gaza, immediately upon the verge of the deſert; and, being willing to accuſtom his troops to action and hardſhip, he left his tents and baggage behind with the army; and, ſecretly taking with him but twenty-ſix horſemen, he made an incurſion upon Samhar, deſtroying all before him, and ſtaying all night, tho' he had no proviſions, in the middle of his enemies, without ſo much as lying down to ſleep, ſlacking his belt, or taking off any part of his armour.

The king was no ſooner gone than the army miſſed him, and was all in the greateſt uproar. But, having finiſhed his expedition, he joined them in the morning, and encamped

camped again with them. On his arrival, he found waiting for him a meſſenger from Tzaga Chriſtos, with accounts that he had fought ſucceſsfully with the Falaſha, entirely defeated them, ſlain many, and forced the reſt to hide themſelves in their inacceſſible mountains. Immediately after this intelligence, Tzaga Chriſtos, with his victorious army, joined the king alſo.

THESE good tidings were followed by others equally proſperous from Hadea and Fatigar. They were, that the king's army in thoſe parts had forced Saber-eddin to a battle, and beaten him, taken and plundered his houſe, and brought his wife and children priſoners; and that the troops had found that country full of merchandiſe and riches of all kinds; that they were already laden and incumbered with the quantity to ſuch a degree, that they were all ſpeaking of diſbanding and retiring to their houſes with riches ſufficient for the reſt of their lives, although a great part of the country remained as yet untouched, and, therefore, it was requeſted of the king in all diligence to enter it on his ſide alſo, and march ſouthward till both armies met. Immediately upon this meſſage, the king, having refreſhed his troops, and informed them of the good proſpects that were before them, decamped with his whole army, and entered the province of Ifat.

WHEN Saber-eddin ſaw the king's forces were joined, that he had no allies, and that it was, in the ſituation of his army, equally dangerous to ſtay or to fly, he took a reſolution of ſubmitting himſelf to the king's mercy; but, firſt, he endeavoured to ſoften his anger, and obtain ſome aſſu-

rances

rances through the mediation of the queen. The king, however, having publicly reproved the queen for offering to intermeddle in ſuch matters, and growing more violent and inflexible upon this application, there remained no alternative but that of ſurrendering himſelf at diſcretion. Whereupon Saber-eddin threw himſelf at the king's feet. The ſoldiers and by-ſtanders, far from being moved at ſuch a ſight, with one voice earneſtly beſought the king, that the murderer of ſo many prieſts, and the profaner and deſtroyer of ſo many Chriſtian churches, ſhould inſtantly meet the death his crimes had merited. The king, however, whoſe mercy ſeems to have been equal to his bravery, after having reproved him with great aſperity, and upbraided him with his cruelty, preſumption, and ingratitude, ordered him only to be put in irons, and committed to a cloſe priſon. At the ſame time, he diſplaced Hydar, governor of the province of Dawaro, of whoſe treaſon he had been long informed; and he inveſted Gimmel-eddin, Saber-eddin's brother, with the government of the Mahometan provinces, who, as he pretended, had not been preſent at the beginning of the war, but had preſerved his allegiance to the king, and diſſuaded his brother from the rebellion.

While the king was thus ſettling the government of the rebellious provinces, he received intelligence that the kings of Adel and Mara had reſolved to march after him into Shoa when he returned, and give him battle.

At this time the king was encamped on the river Hawaſh, at the head of the whole army, now united. This news of the hoſtile intentions of the kings of Adel and Mara, ſo exaſpera-

ted him, that he determined to enlarge his ſcheme of vengeance beyond the limits he had firſt preſcribed to it. With this view, he called the principal officers of his army together, while he himſelf ſtood upon an eminence, the ſoldiers ſurrounding him on all ſides. Near him, on the ſame eminence, was a monk, noted for his holineſs, in the habit in which he celebrated divine ſervice. The king, in a long ſpeech pronounced with unuſual vehemence, deſcribed the many offences committed againſt him by the Mahometan ſtates on the coaſt. The ringleaders of theſe commotions, he declared, were the kings of Adel and Mara. He enumerated various inſtances of cruelty, of murder, and ſacrilege, of which they had been guilty; the number of prieſts that they had ſlain, the churches that they had burned, and the Chriſtian women and children that they had carried into ſlavery, which was now become a commerce, and a great motive of war. They, and they only, had ſtirred up his Mahometan ſubjects to infeſt the frontiers both in peace and war. He ſaid, that, conſidering the immenſe booty which had been taken, it might ſeem that avarice was the motive of his being now in arms, but this, for his own part, he totally diſclaimed. He neither had nor would apply the ſmalleſt portion of the plunder to his own uſe, but conſidered it as unlawful, as being purchaſed with the blood and liberty of his ſubjects and brethren, the meaneſt of whom he valued more than the blood and riches of all the infidels in Adel. He, therefore, called them together to be witneſſes that he dedicated himſelf a ſoldier to Jeſus Chriſt; and he did now ſwear upon the holy euchariſt, that, though but twenty of his army ſhould join with him, he would not turn his back upon Adel or Mara, till he had either forced them to tribute and

ſubmiſſion, or extirpated them, and annihilated their religion.

He then entered the tent-door, and took the ſacrament from the hands of the monk, in preſence of the whole army. All the principal officers did the ſame, and every individual of the army, with repeated ſhouts, declared, that they acceded to, and were bound by, the oath the king then had made. A violent fury ſpread in this inſtant through the whole army; they conſidered that part of the king's ſpeech as a reproach, which mentioned the ſpoils they had taken to have been bought by the blood of Chriſtians, their brethren. Every hand laid hold of a torch, and, whether the plunder was his own or his fellow-ſoldiers, each man ſet fire, without interruption, to the merchandiſe that was next him. The whole riches of Ifat and Hadea, Fatigar and Dawaro, were conſumed in an inſtant by theſe fanatics, who, ſatisfied now that they were purged from the impurity which the king had attributed to their plunder, returned poor to their ſtandards, but convinced in their own conſcience of having now, by their ſacrament and expiation, become the ſoldiers of Chriſt, they thirſted no longer after any thing but the blood of the inhabitants of Adel and Mara.

Soon after, Amda Sion heard that the Moors had attacked his army in Ifat two ſeveral nights, and that his troops had ſuffered greatly, and with difficulty been able to maintain themſelves in their camp. The king was then upon his march when he heard theſe diſagreeable news; he haſtened, therefore, immediately to their relief, and encamped at night in an advantageous poſt, ſhort of his main army, with a view of taking advantage of this ſituation, if the Moors,

as he expected, renewed their attack that night for the third time.

The Abyſſinians, to a man, are fearful of the night, unwilling to travel, and, above all, to fight in that ſeaſon, when they imagine the world is in poſſeſſion of certain genii, averſe to intercourſe with men, and very vindictive, if even by accident they are ruffled or put out of their way by their interference. This, indeed, is carried to ſo great a height, that no man will venture to throw water out of a baſon upon the ground, for fear that, in ever ſo ſmall a ſpace the water ſhould have to fall, the dignity of ſome elf, or fairy, might be violated. The Moors have none of theſe apprehenſions, and are accuſtomed in the way of trade to travel at all hours, ſometimes from neceſſity, but often from choice, to avoid the heat. They laugh, moreover, at the ſuperſtitions of the Abyſſinians, and not unfrequently avail themſelves of them. A verſe of the Koran, ſewed up in leather, and tied round their neck or their arms, ſecures them from all theſe incorporeal enemies; and, from this known advantage, if other circumſtances are favourable, they never fail to fight the Abyſſinians at or before the dawn of the morning, for in this country there is no twilight.

The Moors did not, in this inſtance, diſappoint the king's expectation; as they, with all poſſible ſecrecy, marched to the attack of the camp, while the king, having refreſhed his troops, put himſelf in motion to intercept them; and they were now arrived, and engaged in ſeveral places with very great vigour. The camp was in apparent danger, though vigorouſly defended. At this moment the king, with his freſh troops, fell violently upon their rear; and, it

being known to the Moors that this was the king, they withdrew their army with all poſſible ſpeed, carrying with them a very conſiderable booty.

The ſucceſs which had followed theſe night expeditions, above all, the ſmall loſs that had attended the purſuit, even after they were defeated, from the perfect knowledge they had of the country, inſpired them with a reſolution to avoid pitched battles, but to diſtreſs and harraſs the king's army every night. They accordingly brought their camp nearer than uſual to the king's quarters. This began to be felt by the army, which was prevented from foraging at a great diſtance; but proviſions could not be diſpenſed with. The king, therefore, detached a large body of horſe and foot that had not been engaged or fatigued. The greateſt part of the foot he ordered to return with the cattle they ſhould have taken, but the horſe, with each a foot-ſoldier behind him, he directed to take poſt in a wood near a pool of water, where the Mooriſh troops, after an aſſault in the night, retired, and took refreſhments and ſleep by the time the ſun began to be hot. The Moors again appeared in the night, attacked the camp in ſeveral places, and alarmed the whole army; but, by the bravery and vigour of the king, who every where animated his troops by his own example, they were obliged to retreat a little before morning, more fatigued, and more roughly handled, than they had hitherto been in any ſuch expedition.

The king, as if equally tired, followed them no further than the precincts of his camp; and the Moors, ſcarcely comforted by this forbearance after ſo great a loſs, retreated to receive ſuccour of freſh troops as uſual, and enjoy their repoſe in the neighbourhood of ſhade and water. They had, how-

ever, ſcarce thrown aſide their arms, diſpoſed of their wounded in proper places, and begun to aſſuage their thirſt after the toils of the aſſault, when the Abyſſinian horſe, breaking through the covert, came ſwiftly upon them, unable either to fight or to fly, and the whole body of them was cut to pieces without one man eſcaping.

The king, upon return of his troops, began to conſider, and, by combining various circumſtances in his mind, to ſuſpect ſtrongly, that, from the Moors attacking him, as they had for ſome time lately done, always in the moſt unfavourable circumſtances, there muſt be ſome intelligence between his camp and that of the enemy. Upon examining more particularly into the grounds of this ſuſpicion, three men of Harar (who had long attended the army as ſpies) were diſcovered, and being convicted, were carried out, and their heads cut off at the entrance of the camp; after which the king, who now found himſelf without an enemy in theſe parts, ſtruck his tents, and returned to Gaza in Dawaro.

This movement of Amda Sion's had more the appearance of opening a campaign than the cloſing of one, and occaſioned great diſcontent among the ſoldiers, who had done their buſineſs, and were without an enemy, juſt at that time that the rains fall ſo heavy, and the country becomes ſo unwholeſome as to make it unadviſable to keep the field. They, therefore, remonſtrated by their officers to the king, that they muſt return to their houſes for the ſeveral months of winter which were to follow; and that, after the fatigues, dangers, and hardſhips they had undergone for ſo many

months, to perſiſt in ſtaying longer at ſuch a ſeaſon in this country was equal to the condemning them to death.

GIMMEL-EDDIN, moreover, the new-appointed governor, inſiſted with Amda Sion, that he was able enough himſelf to keep all the tributary provinces in peace, and true allegiance to the king; but if, on the contrary, the king choſe to eat them up with a large army living conſtantly among them, as well as upon every pretence laying them waſte with the ſword in the manner he was now doing, he could not be anſwerable for, nor did he believe they would be able to pay him, the tribute he expected from them. But the king, who ſaw the motives both of his officers and of the Mooriſh governor, continued firm in his reſolutions. He ſharply reproved both Gimmel-eddin and his army for their want of diſcipline, and deſire of idleneſs, and ordered the officers to acquaint their men, that, if they were afraid of rains, he would carry them to *Adel*, where there were *none*; that, for his part, he made a reſolution, which he would keep moſt ſteadily, never to leave his camp and the field while there was one village in his own dominions that did not acknowledge him for its ſovereign.

ACCORDINGLY on the 13th day of June 1316, immediately after this declaration, he ſtruck his tents, and marched into Samhar, to diſappoint, if poſſible, the confederacy that ſome of the principal Mooriſh ſtates had entered into againſt him, which were agreed, one by one, to harraſs his camp by night, and, after having obliged him to retreat to Shoa in diſorder, to give him battle there before he had time to refreſh his troops. The authors of this conſpiracy were ſeven in number, Adel, Mara,

Mara, Tico, Agwama, Bakla*, Murgar, and Gabula, and they had already collected a conſiderable army. The king, who ſaw they perſiſted in their nightly attacks, rode out, thinly accompanied, to chooſe a poſt for an encampment that was to give him the greateſt advantage over his enemy; and, whilſt thus occupied, he was ſuddenly ſurrounded by a body of troops of Adel lying in ambuſh for him. A ſoldier (in appearance an Abyſſinian) came ſo cloſe to the king as to ſtrike him with his ſword on the back with ſuch violence that it cut his belt in two, and, having wounded him thro' his armour, was ready to repeat the blow, when the king pierced him through the forehead with his lance, upon which his party fled.

But the Moors, for five ſucceſſive nights, did not fail in their attempts upon his camp, which wearied and greatly contributed to diſcontent his men; and the more ſo, becauſe the enemy declined coming to any general engagement, though the king frequently offered it to them. Amda Sion, therefore, decamped the 28th of June, and, leaving this diſadvantageous ſtation, advanced a day's march nearer Mara, pointing, as it were, to the very center of that kingdom. But here, again, he was ſtopt by the diſcontent of his ſoldiers, who abſolutely refuſed to go farther, or ſpend the whole ſeaſon in arms, in this inclement climate, while the reſt of his ſubjects, in full enjoyment of health and plenty, were rioting at home.

This diſpoſition of his army was no ſooner known to the king than he called the principal of them together, and,

* A tribe of the Shepherds; all the reſt, but the two firſt, unknown in Abyſſinia at this day.

and, planting himſelf on a riſing ground, he began to harangue his ſoldiers with ſo much eloquence and force of reaſoning, that they who before had only learned to admire their king as a ſoldier, were obliged to confeſs that, as an orator, he as much excelled every man in his ſtate, as he did the loweſt man of his kingdom in dignity. He put his ſoldiers in mind, "that this was not a common expedition, "like thoſe of his predeceſſors, marching through the coun- "try for the purpoſe of levying their revenue; that the in- "tention of the preſent war was to avenge the blood of ſo "many innocent Chriſtians ſlain in ſecurity and full peace, "from no provocation but hatred of their religion: that they "were inſtruments in the hand of God to revenge the "death of ſo many prieſts and monks who had been wan- "tonly offered as ſacrifices upon their own altars: that "they were not a common army, but one confederated up- "on oath, having ſworn upon the ſacrament, at the paſſ- "age of the river Hawaſh, that they would not return in- "to Abyſſinia till they had beat down and ruined the "ſtrength of the Mahometans in thoſe kingdoms; ſo that "now, when every thing had ſucceeded to their wiſhes, "when every Mahometan army had been defeated as ſoon "as it preſented itſelf, and the whole country lay open to "the chaſtiſements they pleaſed to inflict, to talk of a re- "treat or forbearance was to make a mockery at once of "their oath, and the motive of their expedition. He ſhew- "ed, by invincible reaſonings, the great hardſhips and dan- "ger that would attend his retreat through a country al- "ready waſted and unable to maintain his army; what "an alarm it would occaſion in Shoa, to find him return- "ing with an enemy at his heels, following him to his "very capital; that ſuch, however, muſt be the conſe-

"quence;

" quence; for it was plain, that, though the enemy decli-
" ned fighting, yet there was no poſſibility of hindering them
" from following him ſo near as to give his retreat every
" appearance of flight, and to bring an expedition, begun
" with ſucceſs, to an ignominious and a fatal end.

" He upbraided them with his own example, that early
" their prophets had foretold he was a prince fond of lux-
" ury and eaſe, which, in the main, he did not deny, but
" confeſſed that he was ſo; and that they all ſhould have
" an attachment to their pleaſures and enjoyments, he
" thought but reaſonable. He deſired, however, in this,
" they would do as much as he did, and only ſuſpend their
" love of eaſe and reſt as long as their duty to God, to their
" country, and their murdered brethren, required; for, till
" theſe duties were fulfilled, eaſe and enjoyment to a Chriſ-
" tian, and eſpecially to them bound by oath to accompliſh
" a certain purpoſe, was, in his eyes, little ſhort of apoſta-
" cy." A loud acclamation now followed from the whole army. They declared again, that they renewed their ſacrament taken at the paſſage of the Hawaſh, that they were Chriſt's ſoldiers, and would follow their ſovereign unto death.

Though the great perſonal merit of the king, and the grace, force, and dignity with which he ſpoke, had, of themſelves, produced a very ſudden change in the mind of the ſoldiers, yet, to the increaſe of this good diſpoſition it had very much contributed, that a monk, of great holineſs and auſterity of manners, living in a cell on the point of a ſteep rock, had come down from Shoa to the camp, declaring that he had found it written in the Revelation of St John, that this year the religion of Mahomet was to be utterly

utterly extirpated throughout the world. Full of this idea, on the feaſt of Ras Werk, in the month of July, the army paſſed the Yaſs, a large river of the kingdom of Mara, and encamped there. The troops were alarmed, the night after their arrival, by a piece of intelligence which proved a falſehood.

A WOMAN, whoſe father had been a Chriſtian, ſaid, that ſhe had very lately left the Mooriſh camp; that the enemy were at no great diſtance, and only waited a night of ſtorm and rain to make a general attack upon the king's army; and the clouds threatening then a night of foul weather, it was not doubted but the engagement was thereupon immediately to follow. It blew, then, ſo violent a ſtorm, that the king's tent, and moſt of thoſe in the camp, were thrown down, and the ſoldiers were in very great confuſion, imagining, every moment, the Moors ready to fall on them. But whether the ſtory was a falſehood, or the ſtorm too great for the Moors to venture out, nothing happened that night, nor, indeed, during their ſtay in that ſtation.

AT this time a number of prieſts and others came out of curioſity to ſee their king making conqueſts of provinces and people till then unknown to them even by name: ſeveral large detachments of freſh troops from Abyſſinia alſo arrived, and joined the army. Upon this, Amda Sion advanced a day's journey farther into Mara, and took a ſtrong poſt, reſolving to maintain himſelf there, and, by detachments, lay the whole country deſolate. This place is called *Daſſi*. There was neither river, however, nor ſpring near it, but only water procured by digging in the ſand, being what comes down from the ſides of the mountains in the rainy

ſeaſon, and, having filtered through the looſe earth, has reached the ſand and gravel, where it ſtagnates, or finds ſlowly its level to the ſea. Here the king was taken dangerouſly ill with the fever of the Kolla.

The altercations between Amda Sion and his ſoldiers, and the reſolutions taken in conſequence of theſe, were faithfully carried to the king of Adel. The march of the king forward at ſuch a ſeaſon of the year, the ſlow pace with which he advanced towards the very heart of the country, the care he took of providing all neceſſaries for his army, and his reinforcing it at ſuch a ſeaſon, all ſhewed this was no partial, ſudden incurſion, but that it was meant as a deciſive blow, fatal to the independence of theſe petty ſovereigns and ſtates, To this it may be added, that Gimmel-eddin, whom the king had releaſed from priſon, and ſet over the Mooriſh provinces of Abyſſinia, conveyed to them, in the moſt direct manner, that ſuch were the king's purpoſes. He told them, moreover, this march into their country was not either to increaſe their tribute, or for the ſake of plunder, or to force them to be his ſubjects; that Amda Sion's main deſign was againſt their religion, which he and his ſoldiers had vowed they were to deſtroy; that it was not their time to think of peace or tribute upon any terms; for, were they even to ſell their wives and children, the price would not be accepted, unleſs they forſook the religion of their fathers, and embraced Chriſtianity. He further added, that *his* reſolution was already taken, that he would die firm in the faith, a good Mahometan, as he had lived; not tamely, however, but in the middle of his enemies; and that he was now making every ſort of preparation to reſiſt to the lateſt breath.

No

No ſooner was this intelligence from Gimmel-eddin publiſhed, than a kind of frenzy ſeized the people of Adel; they ran tumultuouſly to arms, and, with ſhrieks and adjurations, demanded to be led immediately againſt the Abyſſinians, for they no longer deſired to live upon ſuch terms.

THERE was among the leading men of the Moors one Saleh, chief of a ſmall diſtrict called Caſſi, by birth a Sherriffe, *i. e.* one of the race of Mahomet, and who, to the nobility of his birth, joined the holineſs of his character. He was *Imam*, as it is called, or *high prieſt* of the Moors, and, for both theſe reaſons, held in the greateſt eſtimation among them. This man undertook, by his perſonal influence, to unite all the Mooriſh ſtates in a common league. For it is to be obſerved, that, though religion was very powerful in uniting theſe Moors againſt the Chriſtians, yet the love of gain, and jealouſies of commerce, perpetually kept a party alive that favoured the king for their own intereſt, in the very heart of the Mooriſh confederacies and councils. To overcome this was the object of Saleh, and he ſucceeded beyond expectation, as ſixteen kings brought 40,000 men into the field under their ſeveral leaders; but the chief command was given to the king of Adel.

I MUST put the reader in mind that I am tranſlating an Abyſſinian hiſtorian. Theſe, then, whom this chronicle ſtiles Kings, muſt be conſidered as being only hereditary and independent chiefs, not tributary to Abyſſinia. Their names are Adel, Mara, Bakla, Haggara, Fadiſe, Gadai, Nagal, Zuba, Harlar, Hobal, Hangila, Tarſhiſh, Ain, Ilbiro, Zeyla, and Eſtè. Now, when we conſider that theſe ſixteen kings brought

only 40,000 men, and that they were commanded under theſe ſixteen by 2712 leaders, or governors of diſtricts, all which are ſet down by name, we muſt have a very contemptible opinion of the extent and populouſneſs of theſe newly-erected kingdoms.

It appears to me unneceſſary to repeat, after my hiſtorian, the names of each of theſe villages, which probably do not now exiſt, and are, perhaps, utterly unknown. I ſhall only obſerve in paſſing, that here we find Tarſhis, or Tarſhiſh, a kingdom on the coaſt of the ocean, directly in the way to Sofala; another ſtrong preſumption that Sofala and Ophir were the ſame, and that this is the Tarſhiſh where Solomon's fleet ſtopt when going to Ophir.

Amda Sion's fever hindering him to march forward, and being unwilling to riſk a battle where he was not able himſelf to command, he continued cloſe in his ſtrong camp at Daſſi, waiting his recovery; but, in the mean time, he made conſiderable detachments on all ſides to lay the country waſte around him, till he ſhould be able to advance farther into it.

Of all the royal army, as it ſtood upon the eſtabliſhment, the king had only with him the troops from the provinces of Amhara, Shoa, Gojam, and Damot, and theſe were what compoſed the rear, when the whole, called the royal army, was aſſembled; all his troops were regularly paid, well armed, and cloathed, and were not only provided with every neceſſary, but were become exceedingly rich, and, therefore, the more careleſs of diſcipline, and difficult to manage, on account of the repeated conqueſts that had followed one another

another ever ſince the king had croſſed the river Hawaſh, and come into the deſert kingdom of Mara, unfruitful in its ſoil, but flouriſhing by trade, and rich in India commodities. The ſoldiers had here ſo loaded themſelves with ſpoils and merchandiſe, that they began rather to think of returning home, and enjoying what they had got, than of puſhing their conqueſts ſtill farther to the deſtruction of Adel and Mara. The putrid ſtate of the water, in this ſultry and unwholeſome climate, had afflicted the king with the fever of the country, which he thought not by any means to remedy or prevent. No conſideration could keep him from expoſing himſelf to the moſt violent ſun-beams, and to the more noxious vapours of the night; and it was now the ſeventh day his fever had been increaſing, although he neither ate nor drank. The army expecting, from the king's illneſs, a ſpeedy order to return, converſed of nothing elſe within their camp, with that kind of ſecurity as if they had already received orders to return home.

The Mahometan army had aſſembled, and no news had been brought of it to the king. Saleh's influence had united them all; and the king's ſickneſs had made this eaſier than it otherwiſe would have been. It happened, then, that, the king's fever abating the ninth day, he ſent out to procure himſelf veniſon, with which this country abounds, and which is believed, by people of all ranks in Abyſſinia, to be the only proper food and reſtorative after ſickneſs. After having killed ſufficiently for the king's immediate uſe, the huntſmen returned; two only remained, who continued the purſuit of the game through the woods, till they were four days journey diſtant from their camp, when, being in ſearch of water for their dogs, they met a Moor engaged

in the ſame buſineſs with themſelves, who ſhewed them his army encamped at no conſiderable diſtance, and in very great numbers. Upon this they returned in all haſte to the king to apprize him of his danger, and he ſent immediately ſome horſe to diſcover the number, ſituation, and deſigns of the enemy; above all, if poſſible, to take a priſoner, for the huntſmen had put theirs to death, that he might be no incumbrance to them upon their return.

The king's fever was now gone, but his ſtrength was not returned; and, the neceſſity of the caſe requiring it, he attempted to riſe from his bed and put on his armour, but, fainting, fell upon his face with weakneſs, while his ſervant was girding his ſword.

The horſe now returned, and confirmed the tidings the huntſmen had brought; they had found the Mooriſh army in the ſame place it was firſt diſcovered, by the water-ſide; but the account of their number and appearance was ſuch that the whole army was ſtruck with a panic. The king's wives (as the hiſtorian ſays, by which it ſhould appear he had more than one) endeavoured to perſuade him not to riſk a battle in the weak ſtate of health he then was, but to retire from this low, unwholeſome country, and occupy the paſſes that lead into Upper Abyſſinia, ſo as to make it impoſſible for the enemy to follow him into Shoa.

The king having waſhed and refreſhed himſelf, with a countenance full of confidence, ſat down at the door of his tent: whilſt officers and ſoldiers crowded about him, he calmly, in the way of converſation, told them,—"That, being "men of experience as they were, he was ſurpriſed they

" ſhould be liable, at every inſtant, to panic and deſpon-
" dency, totally unworthy the character of a veteran army.
" You know," ſaid he, " that I came againſt the king of Adel,
" and to recover that province, one of the old dependencies
" of my crown. And though it has happened that, in
" our march, you have loaded yourſelves with riches, which
" I have permitted, as well out of my love to you, as becauſe
" it diſtreſſes the enemy, yet my object was not to plunder
" merchants. If in battle to-morrow I be beaten, for God
" forbid that I ſhould decline it when offered, I ſhall be the
" firſt to ſet you the example how to die like men in the
" middle of your enemies. But while I am living, it never
" ſhall be ſaid that I ſuffered the ſtandard of Chriſt to fly
" before the profane enſigns of infidels. As to what regards
" our preſent circumſtances, my ſickneſs, and the number
" of the Mooriſh troops, theſe make no alteration in my good
" hopes that I ſhall tread upon the king of Adel's neck to-
" morrow. For as it was never my opinion that it was my
" own ſtrength and valour, or their want of it, which has ſo
" often been the means of preſerving me from their hands,
" ſo I do not fear at preſent that my accidental weakneſs
" will give them any advantage over me, as long as I truſt
" in God's ſtrength as much as ever I have done."

The army, hearing with what confidence and firmneſs the king ſpake, began to look upon his recovery as a miracle. They all, therefore, with one accord, took to their arms, and deſired to be led forward to the enemy, without waiting till they ſhould come to them. They only beſeeched the king that he would not expoſe his perſon as uſual, but truſt to the bravery of his troops, eager for action, without being laviſh of that life, the loſs of which would be to

the

the Mahometans a greater victory than the regaining all he had conquered. The king hereon, bidding his troops to be of good courage, take reſt and refreſhment, ſent away the women, children, and other incumbrances, to a ſmall convent on the ſide of the mountain, called *Debra Martel**; and, being informed of the ſituation of the country in general, and the particular poſts where he could get water in greater plenty, he advanced with his army by a ſlow march towards the enemy.

The next day he received intelligence by a Moor, that the Mahometans had not only thrown poiſon into all the wells, but had alſo corrupted all the water in the front of the army by various ſpells and inchantments; that they were not advancing, but were waiting for troops from ſome of the ſmall diſtricts of Adel that had not yet joined the army. Hereupon the king ordered his Fit-Auraris to advance a day before him, and ſent a prieſt, called *Tecla Sion*, with him, that he might bleſs and conſecrate the water, and thereby free it from the inchantments of the Moors. He himſelf followed with his army, and ſat down by a ſmall river a ſhort way diſtant from the enemy.

The Fit-Auraris is an officer that commands a party of men, who go always advanced before the front of an Abyſſinian army, at a greater or ſmaller diſtance, according as circumſtances require. His office will be deſcribed more at large in the ſequel.

The king being arrived at the river, the army began to bathe themſelves, their mules, and their horſes, in the ſame

* Mountain of the Teſtimony.

manner as is uſual throughout all Abyſſinia on the feaſt of the Epiphany. This luſtration was in honour of Tecla Sion, who had conſecrated the water, broken all the magic ſpells, and changed its name to that of the river Jordan. But, while they were thus employed, the Fit-Auraris had come up with a large party of the enemy, and, with them, a number of women, provided with drugs to poiſon and inchant the water; and this numerous body of fanatics had fallen ſo rudely on the Fit-Auraris that it beat him back on the main body, to whom he brought the news of his own defeat.

A VIOLENT panic immediately ſeized the whole Abyſſinian army, and they refuſed to advance a ſtep farther. The tents had been left ſtanding on the ſide of the river they firſt came to, and they then paſſed to the other ſide. But, upon ſight of the Fit-Auraris, they returned to the tents, that, having the river on their front, they might fight the enemy with more advantage if they came to attack them. They did not continue long in this reſolution; the greateſt part of them were for leaving their tents, and retiring to Abyſſinia for aſſiſtance, and, when the numbers ſhould be more upon an equality, return to fight the enemy. The Mooriſh army at this inſtant coming in ſight, increaſed the number of converts to this opinion.

THE king, in the utmoſt agony, galloping through the ranks, continued to uſe all manner of arguments with his mutinous ſoldiers. He told them, that retiring to their camp was to put themſelves in priſon; that, being moſtly compoſed of horſe, their advantage was in a plain like that before them; that retreating to join the main body, at ſuch a diſtance, was a vain idea, as the enemy was ſo cloſe at their

heels. Finally, all he desired of them was, that those who would not fight should only stand as spectators, but not leave their places. As no sign of content or conviction was returned, the king, seeing that all was lost if they disbanded, the enemy being just ready to engage, ordered his master of the horse, and five others, to attack the left wing of the enemy, while he, with a small part of his servants and household, did the same on the right.

The Abyssinian history, seldom just to the memory of individuals, hath yet, in this instance, (almost a single one), preserved the names of these brave men. The first was Zana Asferi; the second, Tecla; the third, Wanag Araad; the fourth, Saif Segued, (one of the king's sons;) the fifth, Badel Waliz; and the sixth, Kedami. These, as is supposed, with their attendants and servants, (though history is silent but as to the six) fell furiously on the left of the Mahometan army.

The king, at the first onset, killed, with his own hand, the two leaders of the right wing; and his son, Saif Segued, having also slain another considerable officer on the left, a panic seized both these bodies of Moors, and the army apparently began, at one and the same time, to waver: On which the Abyssinians, now ashamed of their conduct, and perceiving the king's danger, with a great shout fell furiously upon the enemy. The whole Moorish army having, by this time, joined, the battle was fought with great obstinacy on both sides, till first the center, then the left wing of the Moors, was broken and dispersed; but the right, consisting chiefly of strangers from Arabia, kept together, and, not knowing the country, retired into a narrow deep valley surrounded

ſurrounded by ſteep perpendicular rocks, covered thick with wood.

THE Abyſſinian army, thinking all at an end by the flight of the Moors, began, after their uſual cuſtom, to plunder, by ſtripping and mangling the bodies of the killed and wounded. But the king, who, from the miſtake of the Arabians, ſaw the deſtruction of this right wing certain, if immediately purſued, ordered it every where to be proclaimed through the field, that the whole army ſhould repair to the royal ſtandard, which he had ſet up on an eminence, and give over plundering, under pain of death. Finding this order, however, ſlackly obeyed, he himſelf, ſcouring the field at the head of a few horſe, with his own hand flew two of his ſoldiers whom he found ſtripping the dead without regard to his proclamation. This example from a prince, exceedingly ſparing of the blood of his ſoldiers, had the effect to recal them all to the royal ſtandard diſplayed on a riſing ground.

HE then ſeparated his army into two diviſions; all the foot, and thoſe of his horſe that had principally ſuffered in the ſevere engagement of the day, he led up to the mouth of the valley where the right wing of the Arabians had ſhut themſelves up; and, having beſet all acceſs to the entrance of it, he ordered the foot to climb up through the woods, and on every ſide ſurround the valley above the heads of thoſe unhappy people thus devoted to certain deſtruction.

WHILE this was doing, the king ordered thoſe of the cavalry that had ſuffered leaſt in the fatigue of the day, to refreſh themſelves and their horſes. He knew no time was

loſt by this, as the Mooriſh army that eſcaped from the engagement, worn out with fatigue, thirſt, and hunger, would only retire a ſhort day's march to the water, where, finding themſelves not purſued, and incumbered with the number of their wounded, they would neceſſarily reſt themſelves; and this was preciſely the ſituation, in which his huntſmen firſt found them by the ſide of a large pool of water.

The king gave the command of this part of his army to the maſter of the horſe, with orders to purſue them one day farther; whilſt he, having taken a ſhort refreſhment, began to attack the right wing of the Arabians ſhut up in the valley. The king, diſmounting, led the attack againſt the front of the Arabians, who, ſeeing their ſituation now deſperate, began to make every effort to get from the valley into the plain. But they did not know yet upon what diſadvantageous ground they were engaged, till the ſoldiers from the rocks above, every way ſurrounding them, rolled down immenſe ſtones which paſſed through them in all directions. Preſſed, therefore, violently, by the king in their front, and in the rear deſtroyed by an enemy they neither could ſee nor reſiſt, they fell immediately into confuſion, and were, to a man, ſlaughtered upon the ſpot; upon which the king, giving to his troops orders for a general plunder, retired himſelf to his camp, and in his tent received from the maſter of the horſe an account of his expedition.

This officer had proceeded ſlowly, ſpreading his troops as wide as poſſible upon the tract of the retreating enemy, to give a ſmaller chance for any to eſcape. All directed their flight towards the pool of water, and were there deſtroyed without mercy, till a little after ſun-ſet. The purſuers had then advanced

advanced to the ground where Saleh king of Mara had gathered the ſcattered remains of his once powerful army, but now overcome with heat, diſpirited by their defeat, and worn out by the fatigues of a long and obſtinate engagement, all that remained of theſe unfortunate troops were ſtrowed upon the ground, lapping water like beaſts, their only comfort that remained, equally incapable of fighting or flying. The maſter of the horſe, in great vigour and ſtrength from his late refreſhments and recent victory, had no trouble with theſe unfortunate people but to direct their execution, and this was performed by the ſoldiers with all the rage and cruelty that a difference of religion could poſſibly inſpire. For, after the king's ſpeech of the 9th of June, in which he upbraided them with breach of their oath, and that they were ſlow in avenging the blood of their brethren and prieſts wantonly ſlain by the Moors, every man in the army meaſured the exactneſs with which he acquitted himſelf of the ſacrament at the Hawaſh, only by the quantity of blood that he could ſhed. Weary at laſt with butchery, a few were taken priſoners, and among theſe was Saleh king of Mara. It was evening before the king returned from the ſlaughter of the right wing; and it was night when the ſoldiers, as fatigued with plundering as with fighting, returned to the camp.

The next morning, he heard of the ſucceſs of his cavalry under the maſter of the horſe, who joined him before midday. The unfortunate Saleh was, in ſight of the whole army, brought before the king, cloathed in the diſtinguiſhed habit and marks of his dignity in which he had fought the day before at the head of his troops; gold chains were about his arms, and a gold collar, enriched with precious ſtones

ſtones about his neck. The king ſcarcely deigned to ſpeak to him, whilſt the royal priſoner likewiſe obſerved a profound ſilence. When the army had ſatisfied their curioſity with the ſight of this prince, (once the object of their fear), the king, by a motion of his hand, ordered him to be hanged upon a tree at the entrance of the camp, with all the ornaments he had upon him. After this the queen of Mara, concerning whom ſo many ſurpriſing ſtories had been told of her poiſoning the waters by drugs and inchantments, was, notwithſtanding the known partiality of this king for the fair ſex, ordered to be hewn in pieces by the ſoldiers, and her body given to the dogs.

Amda Sion then diſpatched a meſſenger with the news of his victory to the queens his wives, and the reſt of the ladies he had left with the main army at Debra Martel, when the monks of the convent immediately began a ſolemn proceſſion and thankſgiving, attended by the exerciſe of every ſort of work of charity and piety.

It was now the end of July, when the rains in Abyſſinia become both conſtant and violent, that the king called a council of the principal nobility, officers, and prieſts, to determine whether he ſhould go ſtraight home, or ſend their wives, children, and baggage before them the direct road, when the light and unincumbered army ſhould take a compaſs, and lay waſte a part of the kingdom of Adel they had already invaded, and return in another direction. The majority of the army, and the prieſts above all, were for the firſt propoſal; but the king and principal officers thought the advantages gained by ſo much blood were to be followed, and not deſerted, till they ſhould either have reduced the

Mahometans to a ſtate of weakneſs that ſhould make them no longer formidable to Abyſſinia, or, if proſperous fortune ſtill attended them further, extirpate the people and religion together.—This opinion prevailed.

The king, therefore, diſmiſſed his baggage, his women, children, ſervants, and uſeleſs people. He retained an army of veteran ſoldiers only, more formidable than ſix times the number that could be brought againſt them; and, truſting now to the country into which he marched for ſupport, he advanced, and entered a town called Zeylà, and there took up his quarters. He had ſcarce taken poſſeſſion of the town, when that very night he ſent a detachment to ſurpriſe a large and rich village called Taraca, where he put all the men to the ſword, making the women ſlaves for the ſervice of the army, inſtead of thoſe whom he had ſent home.

The king's views, by ſuch ſmall expeditions, were to accuſtom his ſoldiers to fight out of his preſence, and wean them from a perſuaſion, now become general, that victory could not be obtained but where he commanded.

On the 10th of July, the king continued his march, without oppoſition, to Darbè, whence, the next morning, he ſent different parties to the right and left, to burn and deſtroy the country. They accordingly laid waſte all the province of Gaſſi, ſlaying Abdullah the Sherriffe, who was the governor and ſon of Saruch the Imam, author of the conſpiracy againſt him. From thence he fell ſuddenly upon Abalgé and Talab, a large diſtrict belonging to the king of Adel.

This

THIS prince, hearing that Amda Sion, inſtead of returning, as was uſual in the rainy ſeaſon, into Abyſſinia, had determined to continue to ravage his whole country, had not, on his part, been remiſs in preparing means to reſiſt him; and he had aſſembled, from every province, all the forces they could raiſe, to make one laſt effort againſt their common enemy.

AMDA SION, therefore, had ſcarcely retired from the deſtruction of Talab, when the king of Adel (become now deſperate by being ſo long a ſpectator of the ruin of his kingdom) marched haſtily to meet him, with much leſs precaution than his own ſituation, and the character of his enemy, required. Amda Sion, whoſe whole wiſh was to bring the Moors to an engagement as often as occaſion preſented, left off his plundering upon the firſt news that the king of Adel had taken the field, and, allowing him to chooſe the ground on which he was to fight, the next day he marched againſt him, having (as ſure of victory) firſt detached bodies of horſe to intercept thoſe of the Moors that ſhould fly when defeated; For no general was more provident than this king for the deſtruction of his enemy. He then led his troops againſt the king of Adel, and, ſpurring his horſe, was already in the midſt of the Mooriſh army before the moſt active of his ſoldiers had time to follow him. The Abyſſinians, as uſual, threw themſelves like madmen upon the Moors, at the ſight of the king's danger. The king of Adel was defeated with little reſiſtance: that unfortunate prince himſelf was ſlain upon the ſpot, and the greateſt part of his army deſtroyed (after they thought themſelves ſafe) by the ambuſhes of freſh horſe the king had placed in their rear before the battle.

THE

The three children of the king of Adel, and his brother, who had all been in the engagement, ſeeing the great inferiority of their troops, and terrified at the approaching fate of their country, loading themſelves with the moſt valuable of their effects, (which, in token of humility, they carried upon their heads, ſhoulders, and in their hands,) came with theſe preſents before the king, who was ſitting armed at the door of his tent, and, without further apology, or aſſurance given, threw themſelves, as is the cuſtom of Abyſſinia, at his feet, with their foreheads in the duſt, intreating pardon for what had hitherto been done amiſs; ſubmitting to him as his ſubjects, profeſſing their readineſs to obey all his commands, provided only that he would proceed no further, nor waſte and deſtroy their country, but ſpare what ſtill remained, which was, for the moſt part, the property of Arabian merchants who had done him no injury.

But the king ſeemed little diſpoſed to credit theſe aſſurances. He told them plainly, "That they, and all Ethiopia, "knew the time was when they were under his dominion, "paid him the ſame tribute, and owed him the ſame alle- "giance with the reſt of his ſubjects; that neither he, nor "his predeceſſors, at that time, had ever oppreſſed them, "but returned them preſent for preſent, gold for gold, ap- "parel for apparel, and diſmiſſed them contentedly home "whenever they came to pay their duty to them: That lately, "from ſuppoſed weakneſs in him, when he was young in "the beginning of his reign, and encouraged by the great "addition of their brethren, who flocked to them from A- "rabia, they had, without provocation, thrown off their al- "legiance to him, upbraiding him as a eunuch, fit only to "take care of the women of their ſeraglio, with many ſuch

" taunting meſſages, equally unworthy the majeſty and me-
" mory of a prince like him: That, could this be paſſed over,
" ſtill there was a crime that all the blood of Adel could not a-
" tone for: They had, without provocation, murdered his
" prieſts, burnt their churches, and deſtroyed his defenceleſs
" people in their villages, merely from a vain belief that they
" were too far to be under his protection: That, to puniſh them
" for this, he was now in the midſt of their country, and, if
" his life was ſpared, never would he turn his back upon Adel
" while he had ten men with him capable of drawing their
" ſwords. He, therefore, ordered them to return, and ex-
" pect the approach of his army."

The two eldeſt children and the brother were ſo ſtruck with the fierce manner and countenance with which the king ſpoke, that they remained perfectly ſilent. But the youngeſt ſon (a youth of great ſpirit, and who, with the utmoſt difficulty, had been forced by his parents to fly after the battle) anſwered the king with great reſolution:—

" It is a truth known to the whole kingdom, that Adel
" has never belonged to any ſovereign on earth but to our-
" ſelves. Violence and power, which deſtroy and ſet up
" kingdoms, have at times done ſo with ours; but that you
" are not otherwiſe, than by theſe means, king of our coun-
" try, our colour, ſtature*, and complexion ſufficiently ſhew.
" We have been free, and were conquered; we now have
" attempted to regain our freedom, and we have failed: We
have

* The Moors in general are much ſquarer, ſtouter-made men, than the Abyſſinians.

" have not been inferior to you in every kind of civility, re-
" ceiving you and your predeceſſors when you came into
" our country, ſinging before you, and rejoicing, becauſe
" we knew that you had always among you men of great
" worth and bravery.

" As to the accuſation againſt us, that we robbed the
" Chriſtians, you yourſelf ſee the riches of our country,
" which we get by our own induſtry and commerce,
" whilſt the Abyſſinians were naked ſhepherds and robbers.
" In the days of your predeceſſors, a handful of us would
" have chaſed an army of them, and it would be ſo now,
" were it not for the perſonal valour and conduct of *you*
" their prince. But you, better than any one, can be the
" judge of this; and I can appeal to you, how often they
" have been upon the point of deſerting you, in return for
" all the victories and riches they have ſhared with you;
" while there is not a Moor in Adel but would have willing-
" ly died in the preſence of ſuch a prince as you. It is then
" *you*, not your army, that we fear; we know perfectly the
" value of both. You have already enjoyed all the merit
" and profit of conqueſt; but utterly deſtroying defenceleſs
" people is unworthy of any king, and ſtill more of a prince
" of your character."

The king, without any ſign of diſpleaſure at the freedom of this ſpeech, anſwered him calmly: " Words and reſolu-
" tions like theſe occaſioned your father to loſe his life in
" battle. I come not to argue with you what you are to do,
" nor did I ſend for you to preach to you; but if the queen
" your mother, the reſt of your father's family, and the
" principal people who, after your father's death, are now

" to govern Adel, do not, by to-morrow evening, ſurrender
" themſelves to me at my tent-door, as you have done, I will
" lay the province of Adel waſte, from the place where I
" now ſit, to the borders of the ocean."

This unpromiſing interview with the king was faithfully communicated by the young princes to their mother, earneſtly deſiring her to truſt the king's mercy, and to throw herſelf at his feet the next morning without reſerve. But thoſe who had been the perſuaders of the war (for the late king of Adel was but a weak prince) reckoned themſelves in much greater danger with Amda Sion than was the royal family. They, therefore, agreed to try their fortune again in battle, binding themſelves to live and die with each other, by mutual oaths and promiſes. They alſo ſent to the princes this reſolution, by an old enemy of Amda Sion, perſuading them to make their eſcape as ſoon as poſſible, and come and head their forces that were then raiſed, and ready to conquer or die together, when the family ſhould be out of the enemy's hands.

The king, well informed of what had paſſed, decamped immediately from the ſtation where he was, exceedingly irritated; and, having paſſed the great river called Aco, he took poſt in the town of Marmagab; and the next day, dividing his army, he ſent two bodies by different routes into the enemy's territories, with a ſtrict command to leave nothing undeſtroyed that had the breath of life; he himſelf, with the third diviſion, burning and laying waſte the whole country before him, proceeded ſtraight to the place where he heard the chiefs of Adel were aſſembling an army. There he found ſome troops, moſtly infantry, who kept a good

good countenance, and ſeemed perfectly prepared and diſpoſed to engage him. But an immenſe multitude of uſeleſs people covered the plain, old men, women, and children, with the parents, wives, and families of thoſe he had already ſlain; and theſe were determined, with the remnant of their countrymen, to conquer this invader, or to periſh.

The king, upon perceiving this ſtrange mixture, halted for a time in great ſurpriſe and aſtoniſhment. He could not penetrate into the motive of aſſembling ſuch an army; and ſending a party of horſe, as it were, to diſperſe them, he found everywhere a ſtout reſiſtance; ſoldiers well provided with ſwords and ſhields, and a multitude of archers, who rained ſhowers of arrows upon him, while the women, with clubs, poles, ſtakes, and ſtones, damped the ardour of his ſoldiers, who, when they firſt charged, ſcarcely expected reſiſtance. The king, ſeeing the battle every minute become more doubtful, and having but few troops, began to repent that he had weakened his army by detachments; he inſtantly diſpatched orders to them to advance, and fall upon the enemy in the neareſt direction poſſible. At the ſame time, he himſelf made an extraordinary effort with his horſe, but all in vain; and he found, on every ſide, people who preſented themſelves willingly to death, but who would not quit their ſtation while they had power to defend themſelves in it.

Conspicuous above all theſe for his dreſs, his youth, his many acts of valour, and his graceful figure, was the young king of Wypo, who, encouraging his troops, preſented himſelf wherever Amda Sion was in perſon. The remarkable reſiſtance that this young prince made, ſoon drew the at-

tention of the king of Abyſſinia; who, ſheathing his ſword, took a bow in his hand, and, as my hiſtorian ſays, chooſing the broadeſt arrow he could find, ſtruck this young hero through the middle of his neck, ſo that, half being cut through, his head inclined to one ſhoulder, and ſoon after he fell dead among his horſe's feet.

This fight was one juſt calculated to ſtrike ſuch an army as this with terror. They immediately turned their backs, and, unluckily falling in with the two detachments marching to the king's relief, they were all cut to pieces to the number of 5000; a great proportion of which were women and aged perſons, unſkilled in war, further than as they were prompted by a long ſufferance of injuries, accumulated now to a maſs, that made them weary of life. My hiſtorian further ſays, that three only of the Mooriſh army eſcaped. On the king's ſide many principal officers were killed; and there was ſcarce one horſeman that was not wounded. Amda Sion, therefore, when ſpeaking of this campaign, after his return, among his nobility at Shoa, uſed to ſay, "Deliver me from fighting with old women;" alluding to this battle, where he was in the greateſt danger. The fate of the unfortunate king of Wypo was particularly hard. He had lately married the king of Adel's daughter; and it was the ſtaying for him, and his marriage, that loſt the favourable opportunity of fighting the Abyſſinians, when the army was in deſpondency upon the king's being taken ill of the fever.

The next campaign the king began, by a march firſt to Saſſogade, where he aſſiſted at the celebration of the feaſt of St John the Baptiſt; and he gave orders, that day, to raze all

the Mahometan moſques to the ground, to deſtroy all the grain, burn the villages, and put the people to the ſword, which was executed accordingly. The king then decamped the fourth of July; and, paſſing the great river (Zorat) came to the country of the Oritii, and took up his quarters there. The people of this province were in the very worſt reputation for cruelty, and hatred of the Chriſtian name. They were perpetually making incurſions into the Chriſtian villages, and thoſe that fell alive into their hands, they either caſtrated, cut off their noſe or ears, or otherwiſe mangled them.

The king, to vindicate the ſeverity he was about to exerciſe, ordered all thoſe people, who had ſuffered in this manner, to be collected and brought before him. The number appeared very conſiderable; and, having inquired in what occupations they had been employed, they anſwered, that their buſineſs was to cut down wood, draw and fetch water, and ſome of them to take care of the Mooriſh women. Violently affected with this, he called his principal officers, and commanded them, that, when he decamped with his army the next day, ſmall parties ſhould remain in ambuſh on each ſide of the town. The king, early in the morning, marched out with ſound of trumpet; and the Moors, thinking the army gone, returning to their houſes, were ſet upon by the parties, and deſtroyed.

The next place the king came to was Haggara, where he ſtaid eight days, and celebrated there the feaſt of the Croſs; ſurrounding his camp with paliſades, as if he was to ſtay there a conſiderable time. Here he made his ſoldiers depoſit all their plunder, leaving it under the care of a weak guard,

guard, and marched out with ſound of trumpet, as if he was going upon ſome expedition. There was a large body of troops in ambuſh, and the Moors, concealed in woods, and hiding-places, attacked the intrenchment as ſoon as the king was gone, and had forced the paliſades, when they were every where ſurrounded by the parties left behind, and were all cut to pieces, excepting the old men and women, whoſe noſes and lips the king ordered to be cut off, by way of retaliation, and then diſmiſſed them. Great ſtore of bows, good arms and cloathing, were taken here, lately brought from Arabia for the uſe of the confederates.

The king now turned his face homewards, marched off in ſeven days to Begul in the Sahara, and thence ſent a meſſage to the governor of Ifat, commanding him to ſend to him all thoſe Chriſtians who had apoſtatized from their faith in his or his brother's time; with notice, that, if he did not comply, he would put him and all his family to death, and give his command to another family. The king ordered theſe apoſtates, when delivered, to be ſeverely whipped, and, fettering them with heavy irons, impriſoned them.

From Begul the army marched to Waz, thence to Gett, and from Gett to Harla, ſtill laying waſte the country. From Harla they marched five days to Delhoya, being determined to make a ſevere example of this place, becauſe the inhabitants had killed the governor the king had left with them, and, making large fires for the purpoſe, had burnt and tormented the Chriſtians reſiding there. He came, therefore, upon this town, and ſurrounded it in the night; and, after putting men, women, and children to the ſword, he razed it to the ground.

From

From Delhoya he proceeded to Degwa, from thence to Warga, which he treated in the ſame manner as Delhoya, and then entered the province of Dawaro, where he underſtood that Hydar, governor of that province, with Saber-eddin, and a very valuable convoy coming to him, under their conduct, from Shoa, were intercepted by Hydar's people, and their guard cut to pieces. Inſtead, therefore, of proceeding to Shoa, as his intention was, he encamped at Bahalla, and there kept the feaſt of Chriſtmas, laying the whole province, by parties, under military execution; and hearing there that Joſeph, governor of Serca, was in underſtanding with thoſe of Dawaro, he put him in priſon, carrying off all his horſes, aſſes, mules, and a prodigious quantity of other cattle, which he drove before him, and ended his expedition by his entry into Shoa.

This is the Abyſſinian account of the reign of their prince Amda Sion, a little abridged, and made more conformable to the manner of writing Engliſh hiſtory. The hiſtorian, contrary to the uſual practice, gives no account of himſelf; but he ſeems to have lived in the time of Zara Jacob, the third reign after this. Though he wrote in Shoa, his book is in pure Geez, there being ſcarcely an Amharic word in it.

There are three things which I would now obſerve; not becauſe they are ſingle inſtances, but, on the contrary, becauſe, though firſt mentioned here, they are uniformly confirmed throughout the whole Abyſſinian hiſtory.

The firſt is, that the king of Abyſſinia is, in all matters eccleſiaſtical and civil, ſupreme; that he puniſhes all offences committed by the clergy in as abſolute and direct a manner as

if theſe offences were committed by a layman. Of this the treatment of Honorius is an example, who made uſe only of ſpiritual weapons againſt offences, that ſurely deſerved the cenſure of all churches.

With whatever propriety this ſentence might have been inflicted upon individuals, and, perhaps, without any bad conſequence to the public in general, the law of the land, in Abyſſinia, could not ſuffer this to be inflicted on their king, becauſe very bad effects muſt have followed it towards the common-weal; for excommunication there is really a capital puniſhment if executed with rigour. It is a kind of *interdictio aquæ et ignis*, for you yourſelf are expreſsly prohibited from kindling a fire, and every body elſe is laid under a prohibition from ſupplying either fire or water. No one can ſpeak, eat, or drink with you, enter your houſe, or ſuffer you to enter theirs. You cannot buy nor ſell, nor recover debts. If under this ſituation you ſhould be violently ſlain by robbers, no inquiſition is made into the cauſe of your death, and your body is not ſuffered to be buried.

I would ſubmit now to the judgment of any one, what ſort of government there would be in Abyſſinia, if a prieſt was ſuffered to lay the king under ſuch interdict or reſtriction. The kings of that country do not pretend to be ſaints; indeed, it may be ſaid, they are the very contrary, leading very free lives. Pretences are never wanting, and it is only neceſſary to find a fanatic prieſt (which, God knows, is not a rarity in that country) to unhinge government perpetually, and throw all into anarchy and confuſion. But nothing of this kind occurs in their hiſtory, though the bigotted Le Grande,

Grande, and ſome of the Jeſuits, leſs bigotted than him, have aſſerted, that ſuch a practice prevailed in the Abyſſinian church, to ſhew its conformity with the church of Rome; which we ſhall ſee, however, contradicted almoſt in every prince's reign.

The ſecond thing I ſhall obſerve is, that there is no ground for that prejudice, ſo common in the writers concerning this country, who ſay that theſe people are Nomades, perpetually roving about in tents. If they had ever ſo little reflected upon it, there is not a country in the world where this is leſs poſſible than in Abyſſinia, a country abounding with mountains, where every flat piece of ground is, once a-day, during ſix months rain, cut through by a number of torrents, ſweeping cattle, trees, and every thing irreſiſtibly before them; where no field, unleſs it has ſome declivity, can be ſown, nor even paſſed over by a traveller, without ſome danger of being ſwept away, during the hours of the day when the rain is moſt violent; in ſuch a country it would be impoſſible for 30 or 40,000 men to encamp from place to place, and to ſubſiſt without ſome permanent retreat. Accordingly they have towns and villages perched upon the pinnacles of ſharp hills and rocks, and which are never thought ſafe if commanded by any ground above them; in theſe they remain, as we do in cities, all the rainy ſeaſon: Nor is there a private perſon (not a ſoldier) who hath a tent more than in Britain. In the fair ſeaſon, the military encamp in all directions croſs the country, either to levy taxes, or in ſearch of their enemy; but nothing in this is particular to Abyſſinia; in moſt parts of Africa and Aſia they do the ſame.

THE third particular to be obſerved here is, that, in this prince's reign, the king's ſons were not impriſoned in the mountain. For Saif Araad was preſent with his father at the defeat of Saleh king of Mara, and yet the mountain of Geſhen was then ſet apart as a priſon. For the Itcheguè of Debra Libanos was baniſhed there; from which I infer, that after the maſſacre of the royal family by Judith, on the mountain of Damo, and the flight of the prince Del Naad, to Shoa, the king's children were not confined, nor yet till long after their reſtoration and return to Tigré, as will appear in the ſequel.

AMDA SION died of a natural death at Tegulat in Shoa, after a reign of 30 years, which were but a continued ſeries of victories, no inſtance being recorded of his having been once defeated.

SAIF ARAAD.

From 1342 to 1370.

This Prince enjoys a peaceable Reign—Protects the Patriarch of Cophts at Cairo from the Perſecution of the Soldan.

SAIF ARAAD ſucceeded his father Amda Sion; and it ſhould ſeem that, in his time, all was peaceable on the ſide of Adel, as nothing is mentioned relative to that war.

3. Indeed,

Indeed, if the increaſe of trade and power in that corner of Abyſſinia aroſe from the troubles and want of ſecurity which the merchants laboured under in Arabia, we cannot but ſuſpect, from a parity of reaſoning, that the violent manner in which war had been carried on by Amda Sion, muſt have occaſioned a great many inhabitants to repaſs the Straits, and return to their own homes.

At this time, news were brought from Cairo, that the Soldan had thrown the Coptic patriarch, Marcus, into priſon. There was then a conſtant trade carried on between Cairo and Abyſſinia, through the deſert; and alſo from Cairo and Suakem on the Red Sea. Beſides, great caravans, formerly compoſed of Pagans, now of Mahometans, paſſed from weſt to eaſt, in the ſame manner as in ancient times, to buy and diſperſe India goods through Africa. Saif Araad, not having it in his power to give the patriarch other aſſiſtance, ſeized all the merchants from Cairo, and ſent horſe to interrupt and terrify the caravans. As the cauſe of this was well known, and that the patriarch was in priſon for the ſake only of extorting money from him, people on all ſides cried out upon the bad policy of the Soldan, who thereupon ordered Abuna Marcus to be ſet at liberty, without any other condition, than that he ſhould make peace with Saif Araad on the part of Egypt, which was done through the mediation of that prelate.

WEDEM ASFERI.

From 1370 to 1380.

Memoirs of this and the following Reign defective.

WE know nothing of this prince, only that he ſucceeded his father Saif Araad, and reigned ten years; yet his name, which ſignifies *lover of war*, ſeems to indicate an active reign. It is remarkable, that in this reign is firſt mentioned an æra of Abyſſinian chronology, which has very much puzzled ſeveral learned writers, and the origin of which is not, perhaps, yet fully known. This is that epoch, called that of Maharat, or Mercy, which Scaliger and Ludolf have called the æra of grace. Scaliger ſays, he has toiled much before he found out what it was; and I doubt his toil has not been bleſſed with all the ſucceſs we could wiſh. That it is not the æra of redemption, is plain upon a hundred trials, nor of the converſion, nor of Diocleſian. What it alludes to we know not, but it is firſt quoted in the Abyſſinian hiſtory in this reign, and anſwers to the year 1348 of Chriſt; but from what event it had its origin we cannot poſitively ſay, nor further, than that all which Scaliger has ſaid concerning it is merely viſionary.

DAVID II.

From 1380 to 1409.

WEDEM ASFERI was ſucceeded by his brother David, Saif Araad's ſecond ſon. This prince's reign is remarkable in the annals of the church of Abyſſinia, becauſe, at this time, a piece of the true croſs, on which our Saviour died, was brought hither from Jeruſalem; and, in memory of this great event, the king ordered the ſacerdotal veſt, or capa, which was before plain, to be embroidered with flowers.

THIS king, after reigning twenty-nine years, one day viewing a favourite, but vicious horſe, received ſo violent a kick upon his head that it fractured his ſkull, ſo that he died upon the ſpot, and was buried in the great iſland of Dek in the lake Dembea, or Tzana.

THEODORUS.

From 1409 to 1412.

Memoirs of this Reign, though held in great Eſteem in Abyſſinia, defective; probably mutilated by the Eccleſiaſtics.

DAVID was ſucceeded by his eldeſt ſon Theodorus. He is called Son of the Lion, by the poet, in the Ethiopic encomium upon him, ſtill extant in the liturgy. A miracle is mentioned to have happened, (which would lead us to ſuſpect that he was a ſaint), during the celebration of his feſtival, by his mother, who is called Mogeſſa *. This lady had contented herſelf with providing great quantity of fleſh for the feaſt; but, to make it more complete, the heavens in a ſhower ſupplied it with ſtore of fine fiſh, ready roaſted.

He was buried in the church of Tedba Mariam in Amhara, after having reigned three years. There muſt have been ſomething very brilliant that happened under this prince, for though the reign is ſo ſhort, it is before all others the moſt favourite epoch in Abyſſinia. It is even confidently believed, that he is to riſe again, and to reign in Abyſſinia

* Probably Magwas, or Berhan Magwaſs, the Glory of Grace; a name often uſed by queens; for Mogeſſa has no ſignification, that I know, in any of the languages of Ethiopia.

Abyſſinia for a thouſand years, and in this period all war is to ceaſe, and every one, in fulneſs, to enjoy happineſs, plenty, and peace. Fooliſh as theſe legends are, and diſtant the time, this one was the ſource of great trouble and perſonal danger to me, as will be ſeen in the ſequel. What we know certain in this prince's hiſtory is, that he abrogated the treaty of partition made by Icon Amlac in favour of the Abuna Tecla Haimanout and his ſucceſſors, by which one third of the kingdom of Abyſſinia was for ever to be ſet apart as a revenue for the Abuna. This wiſe prince modified ſo exceſſive a proviſion, reſerving to the Abuna for his maintenance a ſufficient territory in every province of the kingdom. It is ſtill judged immoderate, and has ſuffered many defalcations under later princes, who, perhaps, not acting upon the principles of Theodorus, have not been commended by poſterity in the manner he has been.

ISAAC.

From 1412 to 1429.

No Annals of this nor the four following Reigns.

THEODORUS was ſucceeded by Iſaac his brother, ſecond ſon of David. In his reign the Falaſha, who, ſince their overthrow in the time of Amda Sion, had been quiet, broke out into rebellion. We do not know the particulars, but

apprehend ſome injuſtice was at that time done, or attempted, againſt the Jews; for 24 Judges, 12 from Shoa and 12 from Tigré, (the number having been doubled when there were two kings reigning *), were of a different opinion, and would not comply with the king's will, who thereupon deprived them all of their office. The king, coming upon the army of the Falaſha in Woggora, entirely defeated them at Koſſogué, and, in memory thereof, built a church on the place, and called it Debra Iſaac, which remains there to this day.

Isaac reigned near 17 years, was a prince of great piety and courage. The annals of his reign, probably during the troubleſome time that followed, have been loſt, and with them great part of his atchievements.

ANDREAS I. or AMDA SION.

Isaac was ſucceeded by his ſon Andreas, who reigned only ſeven months, and they were both buried at Tedba Mariam.

TECLA

* That is, while the family of Zagué reigned in Tigré, and that of Solomon in Shoa, before the reſtoration.

TECLA MARIAM, OR HASEB NANYA.

From 1429 to 1433.

THIS prince was third ſon of David, and ſucceeded his nephew. He reigned four years, and took for his inauguration name, Haſeb Nanya.

SARWE YASOUS.

THIS prince was ſon of Tecla Mariam, he reigned only four months; his inauguration name was Maharak Nanya. He has been omitted in ſome of the liſts of kings.

AMDA YASOUS.

SARWE YASOUS was ſucceeded by his brother Amda Yaſous, whoſe inauguration name was Badel Nanya. He was ſecond ſon of Tecla Mariam, and reigned nine months.

ZARA JACOB.

From 1434 to 1468.

Sends Ambaſſadors from Jeruſalem to the Council of Florence—Firſt Entry of the Roman Catholics into Abyſſinia, and Diſpute about Religion—King perſecutes the Remnants of Sabaiſm and Idolatry—Mahometan Provinces rebel, and are ſubdued—The King dies.

THESE very ſhort reigns were followed by one of an extraordinary length. Zara Jacob, fourth ſon of David II. ſucceeded his nephew, and reigned 34 years, and, at his inauguration, took the name of Conſtantine. He is looked upon in Abyſſinia to have been another Solomon; and a model of what the beſt of ſovereigns ſhould be. From what we know of him, he ſeems to have been a prince who had the beſt opportunity, and with that the greateſt inclination to be inſtructed in the politics, manners, and religion of other countries.

A CONVENT had been long before this eſtabliſhed at Jeruſalem for the Abyſſinians, which he in part endowed, as appears by his letters ſtill extant *, written to monks of that convent.

* Vid. Ludolf, lib. 3. No. 29. I have this letter at length prefixed to the large volume of Canons and Councils, a copy of which was ſent by Zara Jacob to the monks in Jeruſalem.

convent. He alſo obtained from the Pope * a convent for the Abyſſinians at Rome, which to this day is appropriated to them, though it is very ſeldom that either there, or even at Jeruſalem, there are now any Abyſſinians. By his deſire, and in his name, ambaſſadors (*i. e.* prieſts from Jeruſalem) were ſent by Abba Nicodemus, the then Superior, who aſſiſted at the council of Florence, where, however, they adhered to the opinion of the Greek church about the proceeding of the Holy Ghoſt, which created a ſchiſm between the Greek and Latin churches. This embaſſy was thought of conſequence enough to be the ſubject of a painting in the Vatican, and to this picture we owe the knowledge of ſuch an embaſſy having been ſent.

The mild reign of the laſt Soldan of Egypt ſeems greatly to have favoured the diſpoſition of Zara Jacob, in maintaining an intercourſe with Europe and Aſia. And it is for the firſt time now in this reign that we read of a diſpute upon religion with the Franks, or Frangi, a name which afterwards became more odious and fatal to whomſoever it was applied. Abba George is ſaid to have diſputed before the king upon ſome point of his religion, and to have confuted his opponent even to conviction. We are not informed of the name of Abba George's antagoniſt, but he is thought to have been a Venetian painter †, who lived many years after in Abyſſinia, and, it is believed, died there. From this time, however, in almoſt every reign, there appear marks of a party formed in favour of the church of Rome, which probably had its firſt riſe from the Abyſſinian embaſſy to the council of Florence.

Although

* St Stefano in Rotondis. † Franciſco de Branca Leon.

ALTHOUGH the eſtabliſhed religion in Abyſſinia was that of the Greek church of Alexandria, yet many different ſuperſtitions prevailed in every part of the country. On the coaſt of the Red Sea, as well as the Ocean, that is in the low provinces adjoining to the kingdom of Adel, the greateſt part of the inhabitants were Mahometans; and the conveniencies of trade had occaſioned theſe to diſperſe themſelves through many villages in the high country, eſpecially in Woggora, and in the neighbourhood of Gondar. Dembea on the ſouth, and the rugged diſtrict of Samen on the eaſt, were crowded with many deformed ſects, while the people of the low valleys, towards Nubia, the Agows at the head of the Nile, and thoſe of the ſame name, though of a different nation and language, at the head of the Tacazzé, in Laſta, were, for the greateſt part, Pagans, *i. e.* of the old religion of Sabeans, worſhipping the planets, ſtars, the wind, trees, and ſuch like. But a more abominable worſhip than this ſeemed eſpecially predominant among ſome of the Agows at the ſource of the Nile, and the people bordering upon Nubia, as they adored the cow and ſerpents for their gods, and ſuppoſed that, by the latter, they could divine all that was to happen to them in futurity.

WHETHER it was that a long war had thrown a veil over theſe abuſes, or whether (which is more probable) a ſpirit of toleration had ſtill prevailed in this country, which had at firſt been converted to Chriſtianity without blood-ſhed, it is not eaſy at this time to ſay. Only their hiſtory does not mention, that, before the reign of this prince, idolatry had been conſidered as a capital crime, or judicially inquired into, and tried as ſuch. An accuſation, however, at this time, being brought againſt ſome families for worſhipping the

cow and the ſerpent, they were, by the king's orders, ſeized and brought before himſelf ſitting in judgment, with the principal of his clergy, and with his officers of ſtate, with whom he aſſociated ſome ſtrangers, lately come from Jeruſalem; a cuſtom which prevails to this day. Theſe criminals were all capitally convicted, and executed. A proclamation from the king followed, declaring, That any perſon who did not, upon his right hand, carry an amulet, with theſe words, *I renounce the devil for Chriſt our Lord*, ſhould forfeit his perſonal eſtate, and be liable to corporal puniſhment.

It has been the cuſtom of all Pagan nations to wear amulets upon their arms, and different parts of their bodies. From the Gentiles this uſage was probably firſt learned by the Jews. Amulets were adopted by the Mahometans, but, till now, not worn in Abyſſinia by any Chriſtians.

These executions, which at firſt conſiſted of ſeven people only, began to be repeated in different places, and at different times. The perſon employed as inquiſitor, and the manner this examination was made, tended to make it ſtill more odious. Amda Sion, the Acab Saat, was the man to whom this perſecution was committed. He was the king's principal confident; of very auſtere manners: he neither ſhaved his head nor changed his cloaths; had no connection with women, nor with any great man in court; never ſaw the king but alone, and, when he appeared abroad, was conſtantly attended by a number of ſoldiers, with drums and trumpets, and other equipage, not at all common for a clergyman. He had under him a number of ſpies, who brought him intelligence of any ſteps taken in idolatry or treaſon; and, after being, as he ſuppoſed, well informed, he

went to the houſe of the delinquent, where he firſt refreſhed himſelf and his attendants, then ordered thoſe of the houſe he came for, and all that were with them, to be executed in his preſence.

Among thoſe that ſuffered were the king's two ſons-in-law, married to his daughters Medehan Zamidu, and Berhan Zamidu, having been accuſed by their wives, the one of adultery, the other of inceſt: they were both put to death in their own houſes, in a very private and ſuſpicious manner. This execution being afterwards declared by the king in an aſſembly of the clergy and ſtates, certain prieſts, or others, from Jeruſalem, in public, condemned this procedure of the king, as contrary to law, ſound policy, and the firſt principles of juſtice, which ſeems to have had ſuch an effect that we hear no more of theſe perſecutions, nor of Amda Sion the perſecutor, during the whole of this reign.

The king now turned his thoughts upon a nobler object, which was that of dividing his country into ſeparate governments, aſſigning to each the tax it ſhould pay, at what time, and in what manner, according to the ſituation and capacity of each province. The proſperity of the Mooriſh ſtates, from the extenſive trade conſtantly carried on there, the bad uſe they made of their riches by employing them in continual rebellions, made it neceſſary that the king ſhould ſee and inquire into each perſon's circumſtances, which he propoſed to do, as was uſual, before the time of their ſeveral inveſtitures.

The chief of the rich diſtrict of Gadai, was the firſt called on by the king, as it is on this occaſion that conſiderable preſents

preſents (ſeldom leſs than two years rent of the province) are given, about one half to the king, the other among his courtiers. There was, at this period, a Mooriſh woman of quality in court, called the queen of Zeyla. She had been brought to the palace with a view that the king ſhould marry her, but he diſliking her for the length, as is ſaid, or ſome other defect, in her foreteeth, had married her to a nobleman.

This injury had ſunk very deep in the breaſt of the queen of Zeyla, though ſhe was only nominally ſo, having been expelled from her kingdom before her coming into Abyſſinia. But it happened that ſhe was ſiſter to Mihico ſon of Mahomet, chief of Gadai, whom ſhe earneſtly perſuaded to ſtay at home, and ſhe ſucceeded ſo far, as not only to prevail upon him to be abſent, but alſo to withdraw himſelf entirely from his allegiance.

At this very time, the king was informed by a faithful ſervant, a nobleman of Hadea, that the chief of Gadai had long been meditating miſchief, and endeavouring to prevail with the king of Adel to march with his army, while great part of the principal people of Hadea, whom he had ſeduced, were to fall, on the oppoſite ſide, upon Dawaro and Bali.

The king, however, received certain accounts from Adel, that all was quiet there; and inquiring who of his Mooriſh ſervants were of the conſpiracy in Hadea, he found them to be Goodalu, Alarea, Ditho, Hybo, Ganzè, Saag, Gidibo, Kibben, Gugulé, and Haleb. As there were ſtill forces enough in the province to reſiſt this confederacy, the

king, inſtead of levying an army againſt them, thought the proper way was to ſend them a governor, who ſhould divide the intereſt and ſtrength of the enemy. There was then an uncle of Mihico remaining in exile at Dejan *, whither he had been ſent formerly into baniſhment at the inſtance of his nephew, but he ſtill preſerved the command of a ſmall diſtrict called Bomo, as well as the good inclinations of his own ſubjects of Gadai, who held his memory in great veneration. The king, therefore, ſent for this governor of Bomo, and, ſetting before him the behaviour of his nephew, he gave him the inveſtiture of his government, with many preſents both uſeful and honourable; and, having ordered ſome troops from Amhara to attend him, he diſmiſſed him, to puniſh and expel his nephew from the province of Gadai.

The fair of Adel was nigh, and thither all the inhabitants of Bali and Dawaro go. It was at this time the conſpirators of Hadea had agreed to fall upon the provinces; while, probably, thoſe at the fair had been likewiſe deſtined to cut off the inhabitants which might be found there. To counteract theſe deſigns, the king, by proclamation, expreſsly forbade any of the inhabitants of Bali or Dawaro to go to the fair, but all to join the governor of Bomo, who no ſooner preſented himſelf in his diſtrict, than the people of all ranks flocked to him and ſubmitted.

Mihico ſaw himſelf undone by this addreſs of the king, of which he was quite uninformed. He fled immediately with

* One of the ſteep mountains uſed for priſons.

with his family, endeavouring, if poſſible, to reach Adel; and having come the length of Bawa Amba, a high mountain, where is one of the narroweſt and moſt difficult paſſes between the high country and the Kolla, here he ſtrowed about, in different places, all the riches that he had brought along with him, in hopes that his purſuers, wearied by the time they came there, ſhould, by the difficulty of the ground, and the booty everywhere to be found, be induced to proceed no further. But this ſtratagem did not ſucceed; for he was ſo cloſely followed that he was overtaken and ſlain, his head, hands, and feet were cut off, and immediately ſent to the king, who, after public rejoicings, gave the government of Gadai to the perſon who firſt informed him of Mihico's conſpiracy, and confirmed the governor of Bomo in the province of Hadea likewiſe, which he made hereditary in his family. In order alſo to be more in readineſs to ſuppreſs ſuch inſurrections for the future, he gave his Chriſtian ſoldiers lands adjacent to each other, forming a line all along the frontiers of the Mahometan provinces of Bali, Fatigar, Wadge, and Hadea, that they might be ready at an inſtant to ſuppreſs any tumult in the provinces themſelves, or reſiſt any incurſions from the kingdom of Adel.

The king now ſet about fulfilling another duty of his reign, that of repairing the ſeveral churches in Abyſſinia which had been deſtroyed in the late war by the Mahometans, and of building new ones, which it is their conſtant cuſtom to vow and to erect where victories had been obtained over an infidel enemy. While thus employed, news were ſent him from the patriarch of Alexandria, that the church of the Virgin had been deſtroyed at that city by fire. Full, therefore, of grief for this misfortune, he immediately

diately founded another in Abyſſinia, to repair that loſs which Chriſtianity had ſuffered in Egypt.

Being now advanced in life, he would willingly have dedicated the remainder of it to theſe purpoſes, when he was awakened from his religious employments by an alarm of war. The rebels of Hadea, by changing their chief, had not altered their diſpoſitions to rebel, and, ſeeing the king given to other purſuits, they began to aſſociate and to arm. The governor, whom the king had created after the death of Mihico, gave the king a very late notice of this, which he diſſembled, as he was the queen Helena's father: but having, under pretence of conſecrating the church of St Cyriacos, aſſembled a ſufficient number of men whom he could truſt, he made a ſudden irruption into the rebel provinces before they had united their forces. The firſt that the king met to oppoſe him was an officer of the rebel governor of Fatigar, who imagined he was engaging only the van of a ſeparate body of Zara Jacob's troops, not believing him to be yet come up in perſon with ſo ſmall a number: But being undeceived, he beſtirred himſelf ſo courageouſly, that he reached the king's perſon, and broke his lance upon him; but, in return, received a blow from the lance of the king which threw him to the ground; at the ſight of which his whole party took flight, but were overtaken and put to the ſword almoſt to a man; nor was the king's loſs conſiderable, his number being ſo ſmall.

Upon this defeat, Hiradin, the governor's brother, declared his revolt, and advanced to fight the king at the paſſage of the river Hawaſh. Zara Jacob, much offended at this freſh delinquency, ſent an officer, called Han Degna, who

found him at the watering-place unſuſpecting an enemy; and, before he could put his army in order, he was ſurrounded, ſlain, and his head ſent to the king, who rejoiced much at the ſight, it being brought him on Chriſtmas day.

After this the king collected his dead, and buried them with great honour and ſhew of grief. He then ſummoned the governor of Hadea, who profeſſed himſelf willing to ſubmit his loyalty and conduct to the ſtricteſt inquiry. Above all the reaſons which hindered him from attending the king, one was known to be, that the queen was not without reaſon ſuſpected to favour the Mahometans, being originally of that faith herſelf, and, therefore, for fear of revealing his ſecret to the enemy, the king did not chooſe to make her father, the governor of Hadea, partaker in his expedition, but, from jealouſy to the queen, ordered him to ſtay at home. Notwithſtanding which it was found, that all in his government were in their allegiance, and ready to march upon the ſhorteſt notice had the king required it; therefore he extended his command over the conquered provinces, in room of the rebel governors whom he had removed.

BÆDA MARIAM.

From 1468 to 1478.

Revives the Baniſhment of Princes to the Mountain—War with Adel—Death of the King—Attempts by Portugal to diſcover Abyſſinia and the Indies.

BÆDA MARIAM ſucceeded to the throne (as his hiſtorian ſays) againſt his father's inclination, after having received much ill uſage during the earlier part of his life, of which this was the occaſion. His mother took ſo violent and irregular a longing to ſee her ſon king, that ſhe formed a ſcheme, by the ſtrength of a party of her relations and friends, truſting to the weakneſs of an old man, to force him into a partnerſhip with his father. Examples of two kings, at the ſame time, and even in this degree of relation, were more than once to be found in the Abyſſinian annals, but thoſe times were now no more. A ſtrong jealouſy had ſucceeded to an unreaſonable confidence, and had thrown both the perſon and pretenſions of the heirs-apparent of this age to as great a diſtance as was poſſible.

THE queen, whoſe name was Sion Magaſs, or the Grace of Sion, firſt began to tamper with the clergy, who, though

they did not abſolutely join her in her views, ſhewed her, however, more encouragement than was ſtrictly conſiſtent with their allegiance. From theſe ſhe applied to ſome of the principal officers of ſtate, and to thoſe about the king, the beſt affected to her ſon and his ſucceſſion. Theſe, aware of the evil tendency of her ſcheme, firſt adviſed her, by every means, to lay it aſide; and afterwards, ſeeing ſhe ſtill perſiſted, and afraid of a diſcovery that would involve her accomplices in it, they diſcloſed the matter to the king himſelf, who reſented the intention ſo heinouſly, that he ordered the queen to be beaten with rods till ſhe expired. Her body afterwards was privately buried in a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, not far from Debra Berhan *.

Nothing had hitherto appeared to criminate the young prince. But it was ſoon told the king, that, after the death of the queen, her ſon Bæda Mariam had taken frankincenſe and wax-tapers from the churches, which he employed, at ſtated times, in the obſervation of the uſual ſolemnities over his mother's grave. The king, having called his ſon before him, began to queſtion him about what he had heard; while the prince, without heſitation, gave him a full account of every circumſtance, glorying in what, he ſaid, was his duty, and denying that he was accountable to any man on earth for the marks of affection which he ſhewed to his mother.

The king, conſidering his ſon's juſtification as a reproach made to himſelf for cruelty, ordered the prince, and, with him,

* Another church on a hill, one of the quarters of Gondar. It ſignifies the Hill of Glory, or Brightneſs.

him, his principal friend Meherata Chriſtos, to be loaded with irons, and baniſhed to the top of a mountain; and it is hard to ſay where this puniſhment would have ended, had not the monks of Debra Koſſo and Debra Libanos, and all thoſe of the deſert, (who thought themſelves in ſome meaſure accomplices with his mother), by exhortations, pretended prophecies, dreams and viſions, convinced the king, that Providence had decreed unalterably, that none but his ſon, Bæda Mariam, ſhould ſucceed him. To this ordinance the old king bowed, as it gave him a proſpect of the long continuance of his family on the throne of Abyſſinia.

Zara Jacob was no ſooner dead, than his ſon, Bæda Mariam, who ſucceeded him, began to apply himſelf ſeriouſly to the affairs of government. From the reign of Judith, (in the tenth century), when ſo many of the princes of the royal family were maſſacred, the cuſtom of ſending the royal children to confinement on the top of a mountain had been diſcontinued. Theſe children all lived at home with their reſpective fathers and mothers, like private perſons; and the kings ſeemed to connive at aboliſhing their former practice, for no mountain had been yet choſen as a ſubſtitute to the unfortunate Damo. The diſagreement between Zara Jacob and his queen, with the cauſe of it, and the prince's frankneſs and reſolution, ſeemed to point out the neceſſity of reviving the ſalutary ſeverity of the ancient laws. Bæda Mariam gave orders, therefore, to arreſt all his brethren, and ſend them priſoners for life to the high mountain of *Geſhen*, on the confines of Amhara and Begemder, which ever after continued the ſtate-priſon for the royal children, till a

ſlaughter,

ſlaughter, like to that made upon mount Damo, was the occaſion, as we ſhall ſee, of deſerting Geſhen likewiſe.

The king applied himſelf next to meaſures for the better government of his country. He ordered a general pardon to be proclaimed to all who, by the ſeverity of the late reign, lay under ſentence of death, baniſhment, or any other puniſhment; and, convoking the ſtates of the kingdom, he met them with a chearfulneſs and openneſs which inſpired confidence into every rank, while, at the ſame time, he filled all the places he found vacant, or that he thought proper to change, with men of the greateſt integrity. He then reviewed the whole cavalry that were in his ſervice, which he diſtributed into bodies, and ſtationed them in places where they could be readieſt called, to execute thoſe deſigns he had then in contemplation.

The next year the king went to Debra Libanos in Shoa. It was, however, obſerved, that his preparations were not ſuch as were uſual in theſe ſhort journies, nor ſuch as were made in peaceable times. On the contrary, orders were ſent to the borders of Tigré to receive the royal army, which was ſoon to arrive in thoſe parts. The rumour of this was quickly ſpread abroad, and affected all the neighbouring ſtates, according to their ſeveral intereſts. Mahomet king of Adel was the firſt that took the alarm. Tho' a kind of peace had ſubſiſted for ſeveral years between Adel and Abyſſinia, yet inroads had been made from each country into the other; and theſe might have ſerved them as pretexts for war, had that been the inclination of the times. Yet, as both countries happened to be diſpoſed for peace, theſe outrages paſſed unnoticed.

But, to prevent ſurpriſe upon this laſt movement of the troops, the king of Adel thought he had a right to be informed of Bæda Mariam's intentions, and, with this view, he ſent ſome of the principal people of his country as ambaſſadors, under pretext of congratulating the king upon his acceſſion to the throne. They met the king in Shoa, and had carried with them very conſiderable preſents. They were received in a very diſtinguiſhed manner; and the preſents which Bæda Mariam returned to the king of Adel were nothing inferior to thoſe he accepted. After having entertained the ambaſſadors ſeveral days with feaſting and diverſions, he confirmed a peace under the ſame duties upon trade that had formerly ſubſiſted.

The king of Dancali alſo, old, infirm, yet conſtant in his attachment to the Abyſſinians, was not without his inquietudes, though he was not afraid they intended to attack his poor territory with an army. He dreaded leſt the army in its march ſhould drink up that little quantity of water which remained to him in ſummer, and, without which, his kingdom would become uninhabited. It is a low, ſandy diſtrict, lying on the Red Sea, juſt where the coaſt, after bearing a little to the eaſt of north from Suez to Dancali, makes an elbow, and ſtretches nearly eaſt, as far as the Straits of Babelmandeb. It has the mines of foſſile-ſalt immediately on the north and north-weſt, a deſert part of the province of Dawaro to the ſouth, and the ſea on the north. But it has no port, excepting a ſpacious bay, with tolerable anchorage, called *the Bay of Bilur**, in lat. 13° 3′; and,

*Bilur, in the language of Samhar, ſignifies *foſſile ſalt*; if it is coloured with any mineral, ſo as to be either red or green, it is, in this latter caſe, applied often to emeralds, and green-rock cryſtal.

and, corruptly in vulgar maps and writings, the Bay of Bayloul.

The kingdom of Dancali is bounded on the eaſt at Azab by part of the kingdom of Adel, and the myrrh country. The king is a Mahometan, as are all his ſubjects. They are called Taltal, are all black, and only ſome of them woolly-headed; a circumſtance which probably ariſes from a mixture with the Abyſſinians, whoſe hair is long. There are but two ſmall rivers of freſh water in the whole kingdom; and even theſe are not viſible above ground in the hot ſeaſon, but are ſwallowed up in the ſand, ſo as to be dug for when water is wanted. In the rainy ſeaſon, theſe are ſwollen by rain falling from the ſides of the mountains and from the high lands of Abyſſinia, and then only they run with a current into the ſea. All the reſt of the water in this country is ſalt, or brackiſh, and not fit for uſe, unleſs in abſolute neceſſity and dry years. Even theſe ſometimes fail, and they are obliged to ſeek, far off in the rainy frontiers of Abyſſinia, water for themſelves, and paſture for their miſerable goats and ſheep.

When the Indian trade flouriſhed, this prince's revenue aroſe chiefly from furniſhing camels for the tranſport of merchandiſe to all parts of Africa. Their commerce is now confined to the carrying bricks of ſolid, or foſſile ſalt, dug from pits in their own country, which, in Abyſſinia, paſs inſtead of ſilver currency; theſe they deliver at the neareſt market in the high lands at a very moderate profit, after having carried them from the ſea-ſide through the dry and burning deſerts of their own country, at the great riſk of being murdered by Galla.

The preſents ſent to Bæda Mariam from Dancali did not make a great figure when compared with thoſe of Adel. They conſiſted of one horſe, a mule, a ſhield of elephant's hide, a poiſoned lance, two ſwords, and ſome dates. Poor as theſe preſents were, they were much more reſpected than thoſe of Adel, becauſe they came from a loyal heart; while the others were from a nation diſtinguiſhed every year by ſome premeditated action of treachery and bloodſhed. The king, having firſt ſent for the Abuna, Imaranha Chriſtos, and called the ambaſſadors of Dancali and Adel into his preſence, declared to them, that neither of theſe ſtates was to be the ſcene of war, but that he was inſtantly to march againſt the Dobas *, whoſe conſtant inroads into his country, and repeated cruelties, he was reſolved no longer to ſuffer. He required the ambaſſadors to warn their maſters to keep a ſtrict neutrality, otherwiſe they would be infallibly involved in the ſame calamities with that nation.

Lent being now near, the king returned to Ifras, there to keep his faſt, and diſtributed his horſe on the ſide of Ambaſanet, having ſent orders to the governor of Amhara to join him immediately, who was then at Salamat beſieging a party of rebels upon Mount Gehud, which ſignifies the *Mountain of Manifeſtation.* It was the intention of the king, that the troops of Amhara, Angot, and Tigré ſhould preſs upon the enemy from the high country, while he with his own troops (chiefly horſe) ſhould cut off their retreat to the plains of ſalt; and it was here that the king of Dancali was afraid that they would interfere with his freſh water.

This

* A race of very barbarous people, all ſhepherds, having great ſubſtance, and much reſembling the nations of Galla. They are Pagans.

This prince kept ſtrictly his promiſe of ſecrecy made to Bæda Mariam, while the king of Adel obſerved a very different line of conduct; for he not only diſcovered the king's intention, but he invited the Dobas to ſend their wives, children, and effects into Adel, while his troops ſhould cut off the king's proviſion, and fight him wherever they ſaw that it could be done with advantage. The plan was ſpeedily embraced. Twelve clans of Dobas marched with their cattle, as privately as poſſible, for Adel; but the king's intelligence was too good, and his motions too rapid, to allow their ſchemes to be carried into execution. With a large body of horſe, he took poſſeſſion of a ſtrong paſs, called Fendera; and when that unhappy people, fatigued with their march, and incumbered with baggage, arrived at this ſpot, they were cut to pieces without reſiſtance, and without diſtinction of age or ſex.

The king, at the beginning of this campaign, declared, that his intention was not to carry on war with the Dobas as with an ordinary enemy, but totally to extirpate them as a nuiſance; and, to ſhew himſelf in earneſt in the declaration, he now made a vow never to depart from the country till he had plowed and ſown the fields, and ate the crop on the ſpot with his army. He, therefore, called the peaſants of two ſmall neighbouring diſtricts, Wadge and Ganz, and ordered them to plow and ſow that part; which having ſeen done, the king went to Axum, but returned again to the Dobas, by the feaſt of the Epiphany. That cruel, reſtleſs nation, ſaw now the king's real intent was their utter deſtruction, and that there was no poſſibility of avoiding it but by ſubmiſſion. This prudent conduct they immediately adopted; and, great part of them renouncing the Pagan

religion, they ſo ſatisfied Bæda Mariam that he decamped from their country, after having, at his own expence, reſtored to them a number of cattle equal to that which he had taken away, having alſo given up, untouched, the crop which had been ſown, and recompenſed the peaſants of Wadge and Ganz for their corn and labour.

HAVING reſolved to chaſtiſe the king of Adel for his treacherous conduct, he retired ſouthward into the provinces Dawaro and Ifat; and, as if he had had no other views but thoſe of peace, he croſſed over to Begemder, where he directed the Abuna to meet him with his young ſon Iſcander, of whom his queen, Romana Werk*, had been lately delivered. From this he proceeded to Gojam, everywhere leaving orders with the proper officers to have their troops in readineſs againſt his return; and having delivered the young prince to Ambaſa David, governor of that province, he proceeded to Gimbota, a town lying on the banks of the Nile, which, in honour of his ſon's governor, he changed to David Haraſa†. Having thus ſettled the prince to his mind, he ſent orders to the army in Tigré and Dawaro to advance into the ſouthernmoſt frontier of Adel. He himſelf returned by the way he went to Gojam, and collecting the troops, and the nobility who flocked to him on that occaſion, he marched ſtraight for the ſame country.

WHILST the king was occupied in theſe warlike preparations, a violent commotion aroſe among his clergy at home. In the reign of Zara Jacob, a number of ſtrangers, after the council

* The pomegranate of gold.

† The ſtation of David.

council of Florence, had come into Abyſſinia with the Abuna Imaranha Chriſtos. Among theſe were ſome monks from Syria, or Egypt, who had propagated a hereſy which had found many diſciples. They denied the conſubſtantiality of Chriſt, whom they admitted to be perfect God and likewiſe perfect man, but maintained that what we call his *humanity* was a precious ſubſtance, or nature, not compoſed of fleſh, blood, and arteries, (like ours), but infinitely more noble, perfect, peculiar to, and only exiſting in himſelf. An aſſembly of the clergy was called, this hereſy condemned, and thoſe who had denied the perfect manhood of our Saviour were put to death by different kinds of torture. Some were ſent to die in the Kolla, others expoſed, without the neceſſaries of life, to periſh with cold on the tops of the higheſt mountains.

THERE was another motive of diſcontent which appeared in that aſſembly, and which affected the king himſelf. A Venetian, whoſe name was Branca Leon, was one of the ſtrangers that arrived in Ethiopia at the time above mentioned. He was a limner by profeſſion, and exceedingly favoured by the late king, for whom he had painted, with great applauſe, the pictures of Abyſſinian ſaints for the decoration of the churches. It happened that this man was employed for an altar-piece of Atronſa Mariam; the ſubject was a common one in Italy, Chriſt in his mother's arms; where the child, according to the Italian mode, is held in his mother's left arm. This is directly contrary to the uſage of the Eaſt, where the left hand is reſerved for the purpoſe of waſhing the body when needful, and is therefore looked upon with diſhonour, ſo much, indeed, that at table the right hand only is put into the plate.

The fanatic and ignorant monks, heated with the laſt diſpute, were fired with rage at the indignity which they ſuppoſed was offered to our Saviour. But the king, ſtruck with the beauty of the picture, and thinking blood enough had been already ſhed upon religious ſcruples, was reſolved to humour the ſpirit of perſecution no farther. Some of the ringleaders of theſe diſturbances privately diſappearing, the reſt ſaw the neceſſity of returning to their duty; and the picture was placed on the altar of Atronſa Mariam, and there preſerved, notwithſtanding the devaſtation of the country by the Moors under the reigns of David III. and Claudius, till many years afterwards, together with the church, it was deſtroyed by an inroad of the Galla.

In the mean time, the army from Dawaro had entered the kingdom of Adel under Betwudet * Adber Yaſous, and, expecting to find the Moors quite unprepared, they had begun to waſte every thing with fire and ſword. But it was not long before they found the inhabitants of Adel ready to receive them, and perfectly inſtructed of the king's intentions, from the moment he left Dawaro, to go to meet his ſon in Gojam. Indeed, it could not be otherwiſe, from the multitude of Moors conſtantly in his army, who, though they put on the appearance of loyalty, never ceaſed to have a warm heart towards their own religion and countrymen. Advanced parties appeared as ſoon as the Abyſſinian army entered the frontiers; and theſe were followed by the main body in good order, determined to fight their enemy before they had time to ravage the country.

A battle

* Betwudet is an officer that has nearly the ſame power as Ras; there were two of theſe, and both being ſlain at one battle, as we ſhall ſee in the ſequel, the office grew into diſuſe as unfortunate.

A BATTLE immediately followed, very bloody, as might be expected from the mutual hatred of the ſoldiers, from the equality in numbers, and the long experience each had in the other's manner of fighting. The battle, often on the point of being loſt, was as often retrieved by the perſonal exertion of the Mooriſh officers, upon whom the loſs principally fell. Sidi Hamet, the king's ſon, the chiefs of Arar, Nagal, Telga, Adega, Hargai, Gadai, and Kumo, were ſlain, with ſeveral other principal men, who had either revolted from the king of Abyſſinia, or whom friendſhip to the king of Adel had brought from the oppoſite coaſt of Arabia.

THE king was ſtill advancing with diligence, when he was overtaken by an expreſs, informing him that his queen Romana was delivered of another prince, chriſtened by the name of Anquo Iſrael. Upon which good tidings he halted at once to reſt and feaſt his army; and, in the middle of the feſtivity, an expreſs from Adber Yaſous brought him news of the complete victory over the Moors, and that there was now no army in Adel of conſequence enough to keep the field. Hereupon the king detached a ſufficient number of troops to reinforce Adber Yaſous in Adel, and continued himſelf recruiting his army, and making greater preparations than before, that, during the firſt of the ſeaſon, he might utterly lay waſte the whole Mooriſh country, or ſo diſable them that they might, for many years, be content to enjoy peace under the condition of becoming his tributaries.

WHILE planning theſe great enterpriſes, the king was ſeized with a pain in his bowels, whether from poiſon or other-

wife is not known, which occaſioned his death. Having, a few moments before he died, recollected that his face was turned on a different ſide from the kingdom of Adel, he ordered himſelf to be ſhifted in his bed, and placed ſo as to look directly towards it, (a token how much his heart was ſet upon its deſtruction) and in that poſture he expired.

He was a prince of great bravery and conduct; very moderate in all his pleaſures; of great devotion; zealous for the eſtabliſhed church, but ſteady in reſiſting the monks and other clergy in all their attempts towards perſecution, innovation, and independency. Many ſtories have been propagated of his inclination to the Catholic religion, and of his averſion to having an Abuna from Egypt; and it is ſaid, that, during his whole reign, he obſtinately perſiſted in refuſing to ſuffer any Abuna in his kingdom. But theſe are fables invented by the Portugueſe prieſts, who came into Abyſſinia ſome time afterwards, and forged anecdotes to ſerve their own purpoſes; for, unleſs we except the ſtory of the Venetian, Branca Leon, there is not a word ſaid of any connection Bæda Mariam ever had with the few Catholics that then were in his country, and even that was a connection of his father's. And as to the other ſtory, we find in hiſtory, that the Abuna had been in the country ever ſince his father Zara Jacob's time; and that, at his deſire, the Abuna, Imaranha Chriſtos, came and received, in the field of battle, large donations in gold, almoſt as often as the king gained a victory. Bæda Mariam died at the age of forty, after reigning ten years, which were ſpent in continual war; during the whole courſe of which he was ſucceſsful, and might (if he had lived) have very much weakened the Mooriſh ſtates, and prevented the terrible retaliation

tion that fell afterwards from that quarter upon his country.---It will be proper now to look back into the tranſactions in Europe, which are partly connected with the hiſtory of this kingdom.

THE conqueſt of the north part of Africa followed the reduction of Egypt, and the whole coaſt of Barbary was crowded with Mahometans, from Alexandria to the weſtern ocean, and from the Mediterranean to the edge of the deſert. Even the deſert itſelf was filled with them; and trade, ſecurity, and good faith, were now everywhere diſſeminated in regions, a few years before the ſeat of murder and pillage.

TARIK and his Moors had invaded Spain; Muſa followed him, and conquered it. The hiſtory of Count Julian is in every one's hand; unfortunate in having had the provocation, ſtill more ſo in having had the power to revenge it, by ſacrificing at once his ſovereign, his country, religion, and life, to the private injuries done to his daughter. As often as I have read the hiſtory of this cataſtrophe, ſo often have I regretted to ſee with how little ceremony this young lady hath been treated by authors of all languages and nations. They call her *Caaba*, with the ſame eaſe and indifference as they would have called her Anne, or Margaret. This muſt be from mere ignorance. Caaba could not be the name of the daughter of Count Julian before her ſeduction. Caaba means *Harlot*, in the broadeſt way poſſible to expreſs the term, and very cruelly and improperly, it ſeems to be given her, even after her misfortune; for ſhe was a daughter of the firſt family in Spain, of unexceptionable virtue.

She was not ſeduced, but *forced* by the king, while in the palace, and under protection of the queen.

A GREAT influx of trade followed the conqueſt; and the religion, that contained little reſtraint and great indulgence, was every where embraced by the vanquiſhed, who long had been Chriſtians in name only. On the other ſide, the conquerors were now no longer that brutiſh ſet of madmen, ſuch as they were under the Khalifat of the fanatic Omar. They were now men eminent for their rank and attainments in every ſpecies of learning. This was a dangerous criſis for Chriſtianity, and nothing elſe was threatened than its total ſubverſion. The whole world, without the help of England, had not virtue enough to withſtand this torrent. That nation, the favourite weapon in the hand of Heaven for chaſtiſing tyranny and extirpating falſe religion, now lent its aſſiſtance, and the ſcale was quickly turned.

AT that time Europe ſaw with ſurpriſe an inconſiderable number of fiſhermen, very inconveniently placed at the fartheſt end of the Adriatic Gulf, applying themſelves with unwearied care and patience to cultivate, gather together, and improve the remnants and gleanings of the Indian trade by Alexandria, under all the cruelties and oppreſſions of thoſe ignorant and barbarous conquerors the Turks, whom no proſpect of gain, no change of place, no frequency of commerce, could ever civilize or ſubject to the rules of juſtice. Venice became at once the great market for ſpices and perfumes, and conſequently the moſt conſiderable maritime power that had appeared in Europe for ages.

GENOA

GENOA followed, but ſunk, after great efforts, under the power of her rival; while Venice remained miſtreſs of the ſea, of a large dominion upon the continent, and of the Indian ſpice trade, the origin and ſupport of all her greatneſs.

RHODES, and the ſhips of the Military Order of St John of Jeruſalem, to whom that iſland belonged, greatly harraſſed the maritime trade carried on by the Moors in their own veſſels from Alexandria, who were every day more diſcouraged by the unexpected progreſs of theſe *once petty* Chriſtian ſtates. Trade again began to be carried on by caravans in the deſert. Large companies of merchants from Arabia, paſſed in ſafety to the weſtern ocean, and were joined by other traders from the different parts of Barbary while paſſing to the ſouthward of them, and that with ſuch ſecurity and expedition, that the Moors began to ſet little value on their manner of trading by ſea, content now again with the labours and conveniencies of their ancient, faithful friend, and ſervant, the camel.

ORMUS, a ſmall iſland in the Perſian Gulf, had, by its convenient ſituation, become the market for the ſpice trade, after the diſcouragements it had received in the Mediterranean. All Aſia was ſupplied from thence, and veſſels, entering the Straits of Babelmandeb, had renewed the old reſort to the temple of Mecca. From hence all Africa, too, was ſerved by caravans, that never ſince have forſaken that trade, but continue to this day, and croſs the continent, in various directions.

JOHN

John I. king of Portugal, after many ſucceſsful battles with the Moors, had at laſt forced them to croſs the ſea, and return vanquiſhed to their native country. By this he had changed his former diſhonourable name of *baſtard* to the more noble and much more popular one of John the *avenger*. This did not ſatisfy him. Aſſiſted by ſome Engliſh navigators, he paſſed over to Barbary, laid ſiege to Ceuta, and ſpeedily after made himſelf maſter of the city. This early connection with the Engliſh aroſe by his having married Philipina of Lancaſter, ſiſter of Henry IV. king of England, by whom he had five ſons, all of them heroes, and, at the taking of Ceuta, capable of commanding armies. Henry, the youngeſt, ſcarce twenty years of age, was the firſt that mounted the walls of that city in his father's preſence, and was thereupon created Maſter of the Order of Chriſt, a new inſtitution, whoſe ſole end and view was the extirpation of the Mahometan religion.

Although every thing promiſed fair to John in the war of Africa, yet it early occurred to prince Henry, that a ſmall kingdom like Portugal never could promiſe to do any thing effectual againſt the enormous power of the Mahometans, then in poſſeſſion of extenſive dominions in the richeſt parts of the globe. The ſudden riſe of Venice was before his eyes, and almoſt happened in his own time. By applying to trade alone, ſhe had acquired a power ſufficient to cope with the ſtouteſt of her enemies. Portugal, ſmall as it was, merited quite another degree of reſpect; but poverty, ignorance, pride, and idleneſs prevailed among the poor people; even agriculture itſelf was in a manner abandoned ſince the expulſion of the Moors.

PRINCE HENRY, from his early years, had been paſſionately addicted to the ſtudy of what is generally known by the name of *mathematics*, that is, geometry, aſtronomy, and conſequently arithmetic. He was of a liberal turn of mind, devoid of ſuperſtition, haughtineſs, or paſſion; the Arab and the Jew were admitted to him with great freedom, as the only maſters who were capable of inſtructing him in thoſe ſciences. It was in vain to attempt to rival Venice in poſſeſſion of the Mediterranean trade: no other way remained but to open the commerce to India by the Atlantic Ocean, by ſailing round the point of Africa to the market of ſpices in India. Full of this thought, he retired to a country palace, and there dedicated the whole of his time to deliberate inquiry. The ignorance and prejudices of the age were altogether againſt him. The only geography then known was that of the poets. It was the opinion of the Portugueſe, that the regions within the tropics were totally uninhabited, ſcorched by eternal ſun-beams, while boiling oceans waſhed theſe burning coaſts; and, therefore, they concluded, that every attempt to explore them was little better than downright madneſs, and a braving, or tempting, of Providence.

BUT, on the other hand, he found great materials to comfort him, and to make him perſiſt in his reſolution. For Greek hiſtory, to which he then had acceſs, had recorded two inſtances, which ſhewed that the voyage was not only poſſible, but that it had been actually performed, firſt by the Phœnicians, under Necho king of Egypt, then by Eudoxus, during the time of Ptolemy Lathyrus, who, after doubling the ſouthern Cape of Africa, arrived in ſafety at Cadiz. Hanno, too, had ſailed from Carthage through the Straits, and

reached to 25° of north latitude in the Atlantic Ocean. In more modern times, even in the preceding century, Macham, an Engliſhman, returning from a voyage on the weſt coaſt of Africa, was ſhipwrecked on the iſland of Madeira, together with a woman whom he tenderly loved. After her death he became weary of ſolitude; and having conſtructed a bark, or canoe, with which he paddled over to the oppoſite coaſt, he was taken by the natives, and preſented to the Caliph as a curioſity. And the Normans of Dieppe had, as a company, traded in 1364, not fourſcore years from prince Henry's time, as far as Sierra de Leona, only 7° from the Line.

The prince's humanity to his Mooriſh priſoners had likewiſe been rewarded by ſubſtantial information; they reported that ſome of their countrymen of the kingdom of Sus had advanced far into the deſert, carrying their water and proviſions along with them on camels; that, after many days travel, they came to mines of ſalt, and, having loaded their cargoes, they proceeded till they came within the limits of the rains; there they found large and populous towns, inhabited by a people totally black and woolly-headed, who reported that there were many countries even beyond them, occupied by numerous and warlike tribes. To complete all, Don Pedro, Henry's brother, returning from Venice, brought along with him from that city a map, on which the whole coaſt of the Atlantic Ocean was diſtinctly traced, and the ſouthern extremity of Africa was repreſented to be a cape ſurrounded with the ſea, which joined with the Indian Ocean.

No ſooner was the prince thus ſatisfied of the poſſibility of a paſſage to India round Africa, than he ſet about conſtructing

ſtructing the neceſſary inſtruments for navigation. He corrected the ſolar tables of the Arabs, and made ſome alterations in the aſtrolabe: For, ſtrange to tell! the quadrant was not then known in Portugal, though, a hundred years before, Ulughbeg had meaſured the ſun's height at Samarcand in Perſia, with a quadrant of about 400 feet radius, the largeſt ever conſtructed, if, indeed, the ſize of this be not exaggerated.

Henry, who, by his liberality and affability, had drawn together the moſt learned mathematicians and ableſt pilots of the age, now propoſed to reduce his ſpeculations to practice. Many ſhips had failed in the courſe of his diſquiſitions, and ten years had now elapſed before the prince, after all his encouragement, could induce the captains to proceed farther than Cape Non, or, thirty leagues further, to Cape Bojador. To this their courage held good; after which, the fear of fiery oceans reviving in their minds, they returned exceedingly ſatisfied with their own perſeverance and abilities. Henry, though greatly hurt at this behaviour, diſſembled the low opinion which he had formed of both. He contented himſelf with propoſing to them different reaſons and rewards; and urged them to repeat their voyages, which, however, conſtantly ended in the ſame diſappointment. And it is probable a much longer time might have been ſpent in theſe miſcarriages, had not accident, or rather providence, ſtept in to his aſſiſtance.

John Gonsalez and Triſtan Vaz, two gentlemen of his bed-chamber, ſeeing the impreſſion this behaviour had made on the prince, and having obtained a ſmall ſhip from him, reſolved to double Cape Bojador, and diſcover the coaſt

yond it. Whether the fiery oceans might not have preſented themſelves to theſe gentlemen, I know not; but a violent ſtorm forced them to ſea. After being toſſed about in perpetual fear of ſhipwreck for ſeveral days, they at laſt landed on a ſmall iſland, which they called Port Santo. Theſe two navigators poſſeſſed the true ſpirit of diſcovery. Far from giving themſelves up for loſt in a new world, or content with what they had already done, they ſet about making the moſt diligent obſervation of every thing remarkable in this ſmall ſpot. The iſland itſelf was barren; but, examining the horizon all around, they obſerved a black fixed ſpot there, which never either changed its place or dimenſions. Satisfied, therefore, that this was land, they returned to the Infant with the news of this double diſcovery.

THREE veſſels were ſpeedily equipped by the prince; two of them given to Vaz and Arco, and the third to Bartholomew Pereſtrello, gentleman of the bed-chamber to Don John his brother. Theſe adventurers were far from diſappointing his expectations; they arrived at Port Santo, and proceeded to the fixed ſpot, which they found to be the iſland of Madeira, wholly covered with wood; an iſland that has ever ſince been of the greateſt uſe to the trade of both Indies, and which has remained to the crown of Portugal, after the greateſt part of their other conqueſts in the eaſt are loſt. John I. was now dead, and Edward had ſucceeded him. The infant Henry, however, ſtill continued the purſuit of his diſcoveries with the greateſt ardour.

GILES D'ANEZ, ſtimulated by the ſucceſs of the laſt adventures, put to ſea with a reſolution to double Cape Bojador cloſe in ſhore, ſo as to make his voyage a foundation

for puſhing farther the diſcovery; and, being lucky in good weather, he fairly doubled the Cape; and, continuing ſome leagues farther into the bay to the ſouth of it, he returned with the ſame good fortune to Portugal, after having found the ocean equally as navigable on the other ſide as on this; and that there was no foundation for thoſe monſtrous appearances or difficulties, mariners till now had expected to find there.

The ſucceſsful expedition round Cape Bojador being ſoon ſpread abroad through Europe, excited a ſpirit of adventure in all foreigners; the moſt capable of whom reſorted immediately to prince Henry, from their different countries, which further increaſed the ſpirit of the Portugueſe, already raiſed to a very great height. But there ſtill was a party of men, who, not ſuſceptible of great actions themſelves, dedicated their time with ſome ſucceſs to criticiſing the enterpriſes of others. Theſe blamed prince Henry, becauſe, when Portugal was exhauſted both of men and money by a neceſſary war in Africa, he ſhould have choſen that very time to launch out into expences and vain diſcoveries of countries, in an immenſe ocean, which muſt be uſeleſs, becauſe incapable of cultivation. And though they did not advance, as formerly, that the ocean was boiling among burning ſands, they ſtill thought themſelves authoriſed to aſſert, that theſe countries muſt, from their ſituation under the ſun, be ſo hot as to turn all the diſcoverers black, and alſo to deſtroy all vegetation. Futile as theſe reaſons were, at another time they would have been ſufficient to have blaſted all the deſigns of prince Henry, had they made half the impreſſion upon the king that they did upon the minds of the people. Portugal was then only *growing* to the pitch

of heroiſm to which it ſoon after arrived, their ſpirit being continually foſtered by a long ſucceſſion of wiſe, brave, and well-informed princes.

EDWARD, the reigning prince, diſdained to give any anſwer to ſuch objections, otherwiſe than by doubling his reſpect and attention for his uncle Henry. To encourage him ſtill further, he conferred upon him for life the ſovereignty of Madeira, Port Santo, and all the diſcoveries he ſhould make on the coaſt of Africa; and the ſpiritual juriſdiction of the iſland of Madeira, upon his new Order of Chriſt, for ever.

THESE voyages of diſcovery were conſtantly perſevered in. Nugno Triſtan doubled Cape Blanco, and came to a ſmall river, which, from their finding gold in the hands of the natives, was afterwards called *Rio del Oro*; and here a fort was afterwards built by the Portugueſe, called *Arguim*. I would not, however, have it ſuppoſed, that gold is the produce of any place in the latitude of Cape Blanco. It was brought here from the black nations, far to the ſouthward, to purchaſe ſalt from the mines which are in this deſert near the Cape. The ſight of gold, better than any argument, ſerved to calm the fears, and overcome the ſcruples, of thoſe who hitherto had been adverſaries to theſe diſcoveries.

IN the year 1445, Denis Fernandes firſt diſcovered the great river Senega, the northern banks of which are inhabited by Aſenagi Moors, whoſe colour is tawny, while the ſouthern, or oppoſite banks, belong to the Jaloffes, or Negro nation, the chief market for the gum-arabic. Paſſing this river he diſcovered Cape Verde; and, to his inexpreſſible

ſatisfaction,

ſatisfaction, though now in the midſt of the torrid zone, he found the country abounded with large rivers, and with the moſt luxuriant verdure. He found a civil war in the nation of Jaloffes. Bemoy, a prince of that nation, had, in a minority, intruded himſelf into the throne of his brothers, (to whom he was but half blood), by the addreſs of his mother. The eldeſt of the three brothers preſerved the ſhadow of government, and ſeemed to favour the uſurpation. Bemoy had improved that interval by cultivating the Portugueſe friendſhip to the uttermoſt. He promiſed every thing; a place to build their city on the continent, which the king very much deſired; and to be a convert to Chriſtianity, the only thing the king wiſhed ſtill more. His eldeſt brother dying, the king was briſkly preſſed by the two younger, and ſteadily ſupported by the Portugueſe, from whom he had borrowed large ſums; but ſtill appearing to trifle with the day of his converſion, and the day of his payment, the king ordered the Portugueſe to withdraw from his country, and leave him to his fortune. The loſs of a battle with his brothers ſoon reduced him to the neceſſity of flying acroſs the deſerts to Arguim, and thence to Portugal, with a number of his followers. He was received by the king of Portugal with all the honours due to a ſovereign prince, and baptiſed at Liſbon, the king and queen being his ſponſors.

GREAT feſtivals and illuminations were made at this acquiſition to Chriſtianity; and Bemoy appeared at thoſe feſtivals as the greateſt ornament of them, performing feats of horſemanſhip never before practiſed in Portugal. The modeſty and propriety of his converſation and behaviour in private, and the great dignity and eloquence which he

diſplayed in public, began to give the Portugueſe a very different idea of his clan from that which they had formerly entertained.

In the mean time the king went rapidly on with the preparations that were to eſtabliſh Bemoy in his kingdom; and the feſtivals were no ſooner terminated, than Bemoy found a large army and fleet ready to ſail with him, the command of which, unhappily for him and the expedition, was given to Triſtan d'Acugna, a ſoldier of great experience and courage, but proud, paſſionate, and cruel; the diſagreeable name of Biſagudo* had already been fixed upon him by his countrymen.

The fleet performed the voyage, and the troops landed happily. They were, by their number and valour, far from any apprehenſion of oppoſition. The general began immediately to lay the foundation of a fort, without having ſufficiently attended to its unhealthy ſituation. The ſpot which was choſen being low and marſhy, fevers began early to make havock among his men, and the work of courſe went on proportionably ſlower. The murmurs of the army againſt his obſtinacy in adhering to the choice of this place, and his fear that he himſelf ſhould be left alone governor of it, made D'Acugna deſperate; when one day, taking his pleaſure on board a ſhip, and having had ſome words with Bemoy, he ſtabbed him with his dagger to the heart, ſo that he fell dead without uttering a word. The fort was abandoned, and the army returned to Portugal, after

* The literal tranſlation of this is, *doubly ſharp*, or *ſharp to a fault*; a character he had gained in Portugal.

ter having coſt little leſs than all prince Henry's diſcoveries together had done.

But Heaven rewarded the wiſdom of the king by a diſcovery, the conſequences of which more than overpaid him, in his mind, for his loſs. Prince Henry's principal view was to diſcover the way to India by the ſouthern Cape of Africa; but this as yet was not known to be poſſible. In order to remedy a diſappointment, if any ſuch happened in this ſea-voyage, another was attempted by land. We have ſeen that the common track for the Indian trade was from the eaſt to the weſt ſea, through the deſert, the whole breadth of Africa. Prince Henry had projected a route parallel to this to the ſouthward, through a Chriſtian country: For it had been long reported by the Chriſtians from Jeruſalem, that a number of monks reſorted thither, ſubjects of a Chriſtian prince in the very heart of Africa, whoſe dominions were ſaid to reach from the eaſt to the weſt ſea. Several of theſe monks had been met at Alexandria, whoſe patriarch had the ſole right to ſend a metropolitan into that country. Theſe facts, though often known, had been as often forgot by the weſtern Chriſtians. Marco Paulo*, a Venetian traveller, had much confuſed the ſtory, by ſaying he had met, in his travels through Tartary, with this prince, who they all agreed was a prieſt, and was called Joannes Preſbyter Prete Janni, or Preſter John.

The king of Portugal, therefore, choſe Peter Covillan and Alphonſo de Paiva for his ambaſſadors. Covillan was a man qualified

* See Marco Paulo's Travels into Tartary.

qualified for the undertaking. He had ſeveral times been employed by the late king in very delicate affairs, out of which he extricated himſelf with great credit by his addreſs and ſecrecy. He was, beſides this, in the vigour of his age, bold, active, and perfectly maſter of all ſorts of arms; modeſt and chearful in converſation, and, what crowned all, had happily a great readineſs in acquiring languages, which enabled him to explain himſelf wherever he went, without an interpreter; an advantage to which, above all others, we are to aſcribe the ſucceſs of ſuch a journey.

It was at the court of Bemoy that the firſt certain account of the exiſtence of this Chriſtian prince was procured. This people, on the weſt coaſt of Africa, reported, that, inland to the eaſtward, were many powerful nations and cities, governed by princes totally independent of each other; that the eaſtermoſt of theſe princes was called prince of the Moſaical people, who were neither Pagans nor Idolaters, but profeſſed a religion compounded of the Chriſtian and Jewiſh.

It ſeems plain that this intelligence muſt have been brought by the caravans; or, indeed, the caſe may have been that the language of the Negroes had, of old, been a dialect of Abyſſinian. The black Ethiopians above Thebes are reported to have beſtowed much care upon letters; and they certainly reformed the hieroglyphics, and probably invented the Syllabic alphabet, which we know is uſed in Abyſſinia to this day, and which was probably the firſt among the nations. Be that as it will, the various names which the Senega went by were all Abyſſinian words. Senega comes from Aſenagi, which is Abyſſinian, and ſignifies *carriers*,

riers, or *caravans*; Dengui, *a ſtone*, or *rock*; Angueah, a tree of that name; Anzo, *a crocodile*; and, at the ſame time, all theſe are names of Abyſſinian rivers.

It was at Benin, another Negro country, that the king again received a confirmation of the exiſtence of a Chriſtian prince, who was ſaid to inhabit the heart of Africa to the ſouth-eaſt of this ſtate. The people of Benin reported him to be a prince exceedingly powerful; that his name was Ogané, and his kingdom about 250 leagues to the eaſtward. They added, that the kings of Benin received from him a braſs croſs and a ſtaff as their inveſtiture. It ſhould ſeem that this Ogané is but a corruption of Jan, or Janhoi, which title the eaſtern Chriſtians had given to the king of Abyſſinia. But it is very difficult to account for the knowledge of Abyſſinia in the kingdom of Benin, not only on account of the diſtance, but likewiſe, becauſe ſeveral of the moſt ſavage nations of the world, the Galla and Shangalla, occupy the intervening ſpace.

The court of Abyſſinia, as we ſhall ſee afterwards, did, indeed, then reſide in Shoa, the ſouth-eaſt extremity of the kingdom, and, by its power and influence, probably might have puſhed its dominion through theſe barbarians, down to the neighbourhood of Benin on the weſtern ocean. But all this I muſt confeſs to be a ſimple conjecture of mine, of which, in the country itſelf, I never found the ſmalleſt confirmation.

Amha Yasous (prince of Shoa) being at court, on a viſit to the king at Gondar, in the years 1770 and 1771, and the ſtricteſt friendſhip ſubſiſting between us, every endeavour

poſſible was uſed on my part to examine this affair to the bottom. A number of letters were written, and meſſengers ſent; and, at this prince's deſire, his father directed, that all the records of government ſhould be conſulted to ſatisfy me. But never any thing occurred which gave room to imagine the prince of Shoa had ever been ſovereign of Benin, nor was the weſtern ocean, or that ſtate, known to them in my time. Yet the country alluded to could be no other than Abyſſinia; and, indeed, the crooked ſtaff, as well as the croſs, corroborate this opinion, unleſs the whole was an invention of the Negroes, to flatter the king of Portugal.

That prince was reſolved no longer to delay the diſcovery of the markets of the ſpice-trade in India, and the paſſage over land, through Abyſſinia, to the eaſtern ocean. He, therefore, as has been before ſaid, diſpatched Covillan and de Paiva to Alexandria, with the neceſſary letters and credit. They had likewiſe a map, or chart, given them, made under the direction of prince Henry, which they were to correct, or to confirm, according as it needed. They were to enquire what were the principal markets for the ſpice, and particularly the pepper-trade in India; and what were the different channels by which this was conveyed to Europe; whence came the gold and ſilver, the medium of this trade; and, above all, they were to inform themſelves diſtinctly, whether it was poſſible to arrive in India by ſailing round the ſouthern promontory of Africa.

From Alexandria theſe two travellers proceeded to Cairo, thence to Suez, the port on the bottom of the Red Sea, where joining a caravan of weſtern Moors, they continued their

route to Aden, a rich trading town, without the Straits of Babelmandeb. Here they ſeparated: Covillan ſet ſail for India, De Paiva for Suakem, a ſmall trading town and iſland in Barbaria, or Barabra of the ancients. What other circumſtances occurred we know not, only that De Paiva, attempting his journey this way, loſt his life, and was never more heard of.

Covillan, more fortunate, paſſed over to Calicut and Goa in India; then croſſed the Indian Ocean to Sofala, to inſpect the mines; then he returned to Aden, and ſo to Cairo, where he expected to meet his companion De Paiva; but here he heard of his death. However, he was there met by two Jews with letters from the king of Abyſſinia, the one called Abraham, the other Joſeph. Abraham he ſent back with letters, but took Joſeph along with him again to Aden, and thence they both proceeded to Ormus in the Perſian Gulf. Here they ſeparated, and the Jew returned home by the caravans that paſs along the deſert to Aleppo. Covillan, now ſolely intent upon the diſcovery of Abyſſinia, returned to Aden, and, croſſing the Straits of Babelmandeb, landed in the dominions of that prince, whoſe name was Alexander, and whom he found at the head of his army, levying contributions upon his rebellious ſubjects. Alexander received him kindly, but rather from motives of curioſity than from any expectation of advantage which would reſult from his embaſſy. He took Covillan along with him to Shoa, where the court then reſided.

Covillan returned no more to Europe. A cruel policy of Abyſſinia makes this a favour conſtantly denied to ſtrangers. He married, and obtained large poſſeſſions; conti-

nued greatly in the favour of ſeveral ſucceeding princes, and was preferred to the principal offices, in which, there is no doubt, he appeared with all the advantage a poliſhed and inſtructed mind has over an ignorant and barbarous one. Frequent diſpatches from him came to the king of Portugal, who, on his part, ſpared no expence to keep open the correſpondence. In his journal, Covillan deſcribed the ſeveral ports in India which he had ſeen; the temper and diſpoſition of the princes; the ſituation and riches of the mines of Sofala: He reported that the country was very populous, full of cities both powerful and rich; and he exhorted the king to purſue, with unremitting vigour, the paſſage round Africa, which he declared to be attended with very little danger; and that the Cape itſelf was well known in India. He accompanied this deſcription with a chart, or map, which he had received from the hands of a Moor in India, where the Cape, and cities all around the coaſt, were exactly repreſented.

Upon this intelligence the king fitted out three ſhips under Bartholomew Dias, who had orders to inquire after the king of Abyſſinia on the weſtern ocean. Dias paſſed on to lat. 24½ deg. ſouth, and there ſet up the arms of the king of Portugal in token of poſſeſſion. He then ſailed for the harbour of the Herdſmen, ſo called from the multitude of cows ſeen on land; and, as it ſhould ſeem, not knowing whither he was going, came to a river which he called *Del Infante*, from the captain's name that firſt diſcovered it, having, without dreaming of it, paſſed that formidable Cape, the object ſo much deſired by the Portugueſe. Here he was toſſed for many days by violent ſtorms as he came near land, being more and more in the courſe of variable winds, but, obſti-

nately perſiſting to diſcover the coaſt, he at laſt came within ſight of the Cape, which he called the *Cape of Tempeſts*, from the rough treatment his veſſel had met in her paſſage round it.

THE great end was now obtained. Dias and his companions had really ſuffered much, and, upon their return, they did not fail to do ample juſtice to their own bravery and perſeverance; in doing this, they had conjured up ſo many ſtorms and dreadful ſights, that, all the remaining life of king John, there was no more talk but of this Cape: Only the king, to hinder a bad omen, inſtead of the Cape of Tempeſts, ordered it to be called the Cape of Good Hope.

ALTHOUGH the diſcovery now was made, there were not wanting a conſiderable number of people of the greateſt conſequence who were for abandoning it altogether; one of their reaſons was curious, and what, if their behaviour afterwards had not been beyond all inſtance heroic, would have led us to imagine their ſpirit of religion and conqueſt had both cooled ſince the days of prince Henry. They were afraid, leſt, after having diſcovered a paſſage to India, the depriving the Mooriſh ſtates of their revenues from the ſpice-trade, ſhould unite theſe powers to their deſtruction. Now, to deſtroy their revenues effectually, and thereby ruin their power, was the very motive which ſet prince Henry upon the diſcovery, as worthy the Grand Maſter of the Order of Chriſt; an order founded in the blood of unbelievers, and devoted particularly to the extirpation of the Mahometan religion.

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Don Emmanuel, then king, having no ſuch apprehenſions, reſolved to abide the conſequences of a meaſure the moſt arduous ever undertaken by any nation, and which, though it had coſt a great deal of time and expence, had yet ſucceeded beyond their utmoſt expectations. It was not till after long deliberation that he fixed upon Vaſques de Gama, a man of the firſt diſtinction, remarkable for courage and great preſence of mind. Before his departure, the king put into his hands the journal of Peter Covillan, with his chart, and letters of credit to all the princes in India of whom he had obtained any knowledge.

The behaviour of Vaſques de Gama, at parting, was far from being characteriſtic of the ſoldier or great man: his proceſſions and tapers ſavoured much more of the oſtentatious devotion of a bigotted little-minded prieſt, and was much more calculated to depreſs the ſpirits of his ſoldiers, than to encourage them to the ſervice they were then about to do for their country. It ſerved only to revive in their minds the hardſhips that Dias had met off the Terrible Cape, and perſuade them there was in their expedition much more danger than glory. I would not be underſtood as meaning to condemn all acts of devotion before military expeditions, but would have them always ſhort, ordinary, and uniform. Every thing further inſpires in weak minds a ſenſe of danger, and makes them deſpond upon any ſerious appearance of difficulty.

July 4th, 1497, Vaſques, with his ſmall fleet, ſailed from Liſbon; and, as the art of navigation was conſiderably improved, he ſtood out to ſea till he made the Canary Iſlands, and then thoſe of Cape de Verde, where he anchored, took in

in water and other refreſhments. After which he was four months ſtruggling with contrary winds and blowing weather, and at laſt obliged, through perfect fatigue, to run into a large bay called *St Helena**, in lat. 32° 32′ ſouth. The inhabitants of this bay were black, of low ſtature, and their language not underſtood, though it afterwards was found to be the ſame with that of the Cape. They were cloathed with ſkins of antelopes, which abounded in the country, ſince known to be that of the Hottentots; their arms were the horns and bones of beaſts and fiſhes, for they had no knowledge of iron.

The Portugueſe were unacquainted with the trade-winds in thoſe ſouthern latitudes; and Vaſques had departed for India, in a moſt unfavourable ſeaſon of the year. The 16th of November they ſailed for the Cape with a ſouth-weſt wind; but that very day, the weather changing, a violent ſtorm came on, which continued increaſing; ſo, although on the 18th they diſcovered their long-deſired Cape, they did not dare or attempt to paſs it. Then it was ſeen how much ſtronger the impreſſions were that Dias had left imprinted in their minds, than thoſe of duty, obedience, and reſignation, which they had ſo pompouſly vowed at the chapel, or hermitage. All the crew mutinied, and refuſed to paſs farther; and it was not the common ſailors only; the pilots and maſters were at their head. Vaſques, ſatisfied in his mind that there was nothing extraordinary in the danger, perſevered to paſs the Cape in ſpite of all difficulties; and the officers, animated with the ſame ardour, ſeized the moſt

* On the weſt ſide of the peninſula on the Atlantic.

moſt mutinous of their maſters and pilots, and confined them cloſe below in heavy irons.

Vasques himſelf, taking hold of the rudder, continued to ſteer the ſhip with his own hand, and ſtood out to ſea, to the aſtoniſhment of the braveſt ſeaman on board. The ſtorm laſted two days, without having in the leaſt ſhaken the reſolution of the admiral, who, on the 20th of November, ſaw his conſtancy rewarded by doubling that Cape, which he did, as it were, in triumph, ſounding his trumpets, beating his drums, and permitting to his people all ſorts of paſtimes which might baniſh from their minds former apprehenſions, and induce them to agree with him, that the point had very aptly been called the Cape of Good Hope.

On the 25th they anchored in a creek called *Angra de Saint Blaze*. Soon after their arrival there appeared a number of the inhabitants on the mountains, and on the ſhore. The general, fearing ſome ſurpriſe, landed his men armed. But, firſt, he ordered ſmall braſs bells, and other trinkets, to be thrown out of the boats on ſhore, which the blacks greedily took up, and ventured ſo near as to take one of them out of the general's own hand. Upon his landing, he was welcomed with the ſound of flutes and ſinging. Vaſques, on his part, ordered his trumpets to ſound, and his men to dance round them.

All along from St Blaze, for more than ſixty leagues, they found the coaſt remarkably pleaſant, full of high and fair trees. On Chriſtmas day they made land, and entered a river which they called *the river of the kings*; and all the diſtance

diſtance between this and St Blaze they named *Terra de Natal.* The weather being mild, they took to their boats to row along the ſhore, on which were obſerved both men and women of a large ſtature, but who ſeemed to be of quiet and civil behaviour. The general ordered Martin Alonzo, who ſpoke ſeveral languages of the Negroes, to land; and he was ſo well received by the chief, or king, that the admiral ſent him ſeveral trifles, with which he was wonderfully pleaſed, and offered, in return, any thing he wanted of the produce of his country.

On the 15th of January, in the year 1498, having taken in plenty of water, which the Negroes, of their own accord, helped them to put on board, they left this civil nation, ſteering paſt a length of coaſt terminated by a Cape called the *Cape of Currents.* There the coaſt of Natal ends, and that of Sofala begins, to the northward of the Cape. At this place, Gama from the ſouth joined Covillan's track from the north, and theſe two Portugueſe had completely made the circuit of Africa.

ISCANDER, OR ALEXANDER.

From 1478 to 1495.

Eſcander declares War with Adel—Good Conduct of the King—Betrayed and murdered by Za Saluce.

AS ſoon as the king Bæda Mariam was dead, the hiſtory of Abyſſinia informs us, that a tumultuous meeting of the nobles brought from the mountain of Geſhen the queen Romana, with her ſon Iſcander, who upon his arrival was crowned without any oppoſition.

IT is to be obſerved in the Abyſſinian annals, that very frequent minorities happen. A queen-mother, or regent, with two or three of the greateſt intereſt at court, are, during the minority, in poſſeſſion of the king's perſon, and govern in his name. The tranſactions of this minority, too, are as carefully inſerted in the annals of the kingdom as any other part of the ſubſequent government, but as the whole of theſe minorities are but one continued chain of quarrels, plots, and treachery, as ſoon as the king comes of age, the greateſt part of this reign of his miniſters is cancelled, as being the acts of ſubjects, and not worthy to be inſerted

inſerted in their hiſtories; which they entitle *Kebra Za Negu*ſ*t*, the greatneſs or atchievements of their kings. This, however political in itſelf, is a great diſadvantage to hiſtory, by concealing from poſterity the firſt cauſe of the moſt important tranſactions.

For ſeveral years after Iſcander aſcended the throne, the queen his mother, together with the Acab Saat, Tesfo Georgis, and Betwudet Amdu, governed the kingdom deſpotically under the name of the young king. Accordingly, after ſome years ſufferance, a conſpiracy was formed, at the head of which were two men of great power, Abba Amdu and Abba Haſabo, but the conſpirators proving unſucceſsful, ſome of them were impriſoned, ſome put to death, and others baniſhed to unwholeſome places, there to periſh with hunger and fevers.

The king from his early age had ſhewn a paſſionate deſire for a war with Adel, and that prince, whoſe country had been ſo often deſolated by the Abyſſinian armies, omitted no opportunity of creating an intereſt at that court, that ſhould keep things in a quiet ſtate. In this, however, he was much interrupted at preſent by a neighbouring chief of Arar, named Maffudi. This man, exceedingly brave, capable of enduring the greateſt hardſhips, and a very great bigot to the Mahometan religion, had made a vow, that, every Lent, he would ſpend the whole forty days in ſome part of the Abyſſinian kingdom; and to this purpoſe he had raiſed, at his own expence, a ſmall body of veteran troops, whom he inſpired with the ſame ſpirit and reſolution. Sometimes he fell on one part of the frontier, ſometimes upon another; ſlaying, without mercy, all that made

reſiſtance, and driving off whole villages of men, women, and children, whom he ſent into Arabia, or India, to be ſold as ſlaves.

It was a matter of great difficulty for the king of Adel to perſuade the Abyſſinians that Maſſudi acted without his inſtigation. The young king was one who could not diſtinguiſh Adel from Arar, or Mahomet's army from Maſſudi's. He bore with very great impatience the exceſſes every year committed by the latter; but he was over-ruled by his nobility at home, and his thoughts turned as much as poſſible to hunting, to which he willingly gave himſelf up; and, tho' but fifteen years of age, was the perſon, in all Abyſſinia, moſt dexterous at managing his arms. At laſt, being arrived at the age of ſeventeen, and returning from having obſerved a very ſucceſsful expedition made by Maſſudi againſt his territories, he ordered Za Saluce, his firſt miniſter, commander in chief, and governor of Amhara, to raiſe the whole forces to the ſouthward, while he himſelf collected the nobility in Angot and Tigré. With thoſe, as ſoon as the rainy ſeaſon was over, he deſcended into the kingdom of Adel.

The king of Adel had been forced into this war, yet, like a wiſe prince, he was not unprepared for it. He had advanced directly towards the king, but had not paſſed his frontiers. Some inhabitants of a village called *Arno*, all Mahometans, but tributary to the king of Abyſſinia, had murdered the governor the king had ſet over them. Iſcander marched directly to deſtroy it, which he had no ſooner accompliſhed, than the Mooriſh army preſented itſelf. The battle was maintained obſtinately on both ſides, till the troops under

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Za Saluce withdrew in the heat of the engagement, leaving the king in the midſt of his enemies. This treaſon, however, ſeemed to have inſpired the ſmall army that remained with new courage, ſo that the day was as yet dubious, when Iſcander, being engaged in a narrow paſs, and ſeeing himſelf cloſe preſſed by a Moor who bore in his hand the green ſtandard of Mahomet, turned ſuddenly upon him, and ſlew him with a javelin; and, having wreſted the colours from him as he was falling, he, with the point of the ſpear that bore the enſign, ſtruck the king of Adel's ſon dead to the ground, which immediately cauſed the Moors to retreat.

The young prince was too prudent to follow this victory in the ſtate the army then was; for that of Adel, though it had retreated, did not diſperſe. Za Saluce was returning by long marches to Amhara, exciting all thoſe in his way to revolt; and it was high time, therefore, for the king to follow him. But, unequal as he was in ſtrength to the Moors, he could not reconcile it with his own honour to leave their army maſters of the field. He, therefore, firſt conſulted the principal officers of his troops, then harangued his men, which, the hiſtorian ſays, he did in the moſt pathetic and maſterly manner; ſo that, with one voice, they deſired inſtantly to be led to the Moors. The king is ſaid to have ranged his little army in a manner that aſtoniſhed the oldeſt officers. He then ſent a defiance to the Moors, by ſeveral priſoners whom he releaſed. They, however, more deſirous to keep him from ravaging the country than to fight another battle, continued quiet in their tents; and the king, after remaining on the field till near noon, drew off his troops in the preſence of his enemy, making a re-

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treat which would not have been unworthy of the hero whoſe name he bore.

THE king, in his return to Shoa, left his troops, which was the northern army, in the northern provinces, as he paſſed; ſo that he came to Shoa with a very ſmall retinue, hearing that Za Saluce had gone to Amhara. This traitor, however, had left his creatures behind him, after inſtructing them what they were to do. Accordingly, the ſecond day after Iſcander's arrival in Tegulat, the capital of Shoa, they ſet upon him, during the night, in a ſmall houſe in Aylo Meidan, and murdered him while he was ſleeping. They concealed his body for ſome days in a mill, but Taka Chriſtos, and ſome others of the king's friends, took up the corpſe and expoſed it to the people, who, with one accord, proclaimed Andreas, ſon of Iſcander, king; and Za Saluce and his adherents, traitors.

IN the mean time, Za Saluce, far from finding the encouragement he expected in Amhara, was, upon his firſt appearance, ſet upon by the nobility of that province; and, being deſerted by his troops, he was taken priſoner; his eyes were put out, and, being mounted on an aſs, he was carried amidſt the curſes of the people through the provinces of Amhara and Shoa.

ISCANDER was ſucceeded by his ſon Andreas, or Amda Sion, an infant, who reigned ſeven months only.

A WONDERFUL confuſion ſeems to be introduced at this time into hiſtory, by the Portugueſe writers. Iſcander is ſaid to die in the 1490. He began, as they ſay, to reign

in 1475, and this is confirmed by Ludolf; and, on all hands, it is allowed he reigned 17 years, which would have brought the laſt year of his reign to 1492. It ſeems alſo to be agreed by the generality of them, that Covillan ſaw and converſed with this prince, Iſcander, ſome time before his death: this he very well might have done, if that prince lived to the 1492, and Peter Covillan came into Abyſſinia in 1490, as Galvan ſays in his father's memoirs. But then Tellez informs us expreſsly, that Iſcander was dead 6 months before the arrival of Peter Covillan in that country: If Peter Covillan arrived 6 months after the death of Iſcander, it muſt have been in the end of his ſon's reign, Amda Sion, who was an infant, and reigned only 7 months.

Alvarez omits this king, Amda Sion, altogether, and ſo does Tellez; and there is a heap of miſtakes here that ſhew theſe Portugueſe hiſtorians paid very little attention to the chronology of theſe reigns. They call Alexander the father of Naod, when he was really but his brother; and Helena, they ſay, was David's mother, when, in fact, ſhe was his grandmother, or rather his grandfather's wife; for Helena, who was Iteghé in the time of David the III. had never either ſon or daughter. So that if I differ, as in fact I do, 4 years, or thereabout, in this account, I do not think in thoſe remote times, when the language and manner of accounting was ſo little known to theſe ſtrangers, that I, therefore, ſhould reject my own account and ſervilely adopt theirs, and the more ſo, becauſe, as we ſhall ſee in its proper place, by the examination and compariſon made by help of an eclipſe of the ſun in the 13th year of Claudius' reign in the 1553, and counting from that downwards to my arrival in Abyſſinia, and backwards to Iſcander, that that prince muſt have begun

gun his reign in 1478, and reigning 17 years, did not die till the year 1495, and therefore muſt have ſeen Peter Covillan, and converſed with him, if he had arrived in Abyſſinia ſo early as the 1490.

NAOD.

From 1495 to 1508.

Wiſe Conduct of the King—Prepares for a War with the Moors—Concludes an honourable Peace with Adel.

AFTER the unfortunate death of the young king Alexander, the people in general, wearied of minorities, unanimouſly choſe Naod for their king. He was Alexander's younger brother, the difference of ages being but one year, though he was not by the ſame mother, but by the the king's ſecond wife Calliope. He was born at a town called Gabargué, the day the royal army was cut off in his father's time, when both the Betwudets periſhed. From this circumſtance, the Empreſs Helena and her party had uſed ſome underhand means to ſet him aſide as unfortunate, and in his place to put Anquo Iſrael, Bæda Mariam's youngeſt ſon, that they might govern him and the kingdom during his non-age. But Taka Chriſtos, their man of confidence, being, on his firſt declaration of ſuch intentions, cut off by the army in Dawaro, Naod was immedi-

ately proclaimed, and brought from the mountain of Geſhen.

ALTHOUGH Naod was in the prime of life, and vigorous both in body and mind, yet ſuch were the circumſtances of the kingdom at his acceſſion, that it ſeemed a taſk too arduous for any one man. The continual intrigues of the empreſs, the quantity of Mahometan gold which was circulating on every occaſion throughout the court, the little ſucceſs the army had in Adel, as alſo the treachery of Za Saluce, and the untimely end of the young prince, who ſeemed to promiſe a remedy to the misfortunes, had ſo diſunited the principal people in the government, that there did not ſeem a ſufficient number of men worthy of truſt to aſſiſt the king with their councils, or fill, with any degree of dignity, the places that were vacant.

NAOD was no ſooner ſeated on the throne than he publiſhed a very general and comprehenſive amneſty. By proclamation he declared, "That any perſon who ſhould upbraid another with being a party in the misfortunes of paſt times, or ſay that he had been privy to this or to that conſpiracy, or had been a favourite of the empreſs, or a partizan of Za Saluce, or had received bribes from the Moors, ſhould, without delay, be put to death." This proclamation had the very beſt effect, as it quieted the mind of every guilty perſon when he ſaw the king, from whom he feared an inquiry, cutting off all poſſible means by which it could be procured againſt him. Andreas a monk, a man of quality, and of very great conſequence in that country, a relation of the king by his mother, having affected to talk lightly of the proclamation, the king ſent for

him, and ordered the tip of his tongue to be cut off in his preſence. This man, whoſe fault ſeems only to have been in his tongue, and of whom a very great character is given, lived in the ſucceeding reign to give the king a very diſtinguiſhed proof of his attachment to his family, and love of his country.

Naod having thus prudently quieted diſturbances at home, turned his thoughts to the war with Maffudi; for the king of Adel himſelf had made his peace through mediation of the empreſs Helena; and this king, more politic than Alexander his brother, was willing to diſſemble with the king of Adel, that he might fight his two adverſaries ſingly: He, therefore, prepared a ſmaller army than was uſual for the king to head, without ſuffering a Moor of any kind to ſerve in it.

It was known to a day when Maffudi was to enter upon his expeditions againſt Abyſſinia. For near thirty years he had begun to burn the churches, and drive off the people and cattle on the firſt day of Lent; and, as Lent advanced, he with his army penetrated farther up the country. The Abyſſinians are the ſtricteſt people in the world in keeping faſts. They are ſo auſtere that they taſte no ſort of animal food, nor butter, eggs, oil, or wine. They will not, though ever ſo thirſty, drink a cup of water till ſix o'clock in the evening, and then are contented, perhaps, with dry or ſour leaven bread, the beſt of them only making uſe of honey; by which means they become ſo weak as to be unable to bear any fatigue. This was Maffudi's reaſon for invading the country in Lent, at which time ſcarce a Chriſtian, through faſting, was able to bear arms.

Naod, like a wiſe prince who had gained the confidence of his army, would not carry with him any man who did not, for that time, live in the ſame free and full manner he was uſed to do in feſtivals. He himſelf ſet the example; and Andreas the monk, after taking upon himſelf a vow of a whole year's faſting for the ſucceſs of the army, declared to them, that there was more merit in ſaving one Chriſtian village from ſlavery, and turning Mahometan, than in faſting their whole lives.

The king then marched againſt Maffudi; and having taken very ſtrong ground, as if afraid of his army's weakneſs, the Moors, contrary to advice of their leader, attacked the king's camp in the moſt careleſs and preſumptuous manner. They had no ſooner entered, however, by ways left open on purpoſe for them, than they found the king's army in order to receive them, and were ſo rudely attacked, that moſt of thoſe who had penetrated into the camp were left dead upon the ſpot. The king continued the purſuit with his troops, retook all the priſoners and cattle which Maffudi was driving away, and advanced towards the frontiers of Adel, where ambaſſadors met him, hoping, on the part of the king, that his intention was not to violate the treaty of peace.

To this the king anſwered, That, ſo far from it, he would confirm the peace with them, but with this condition, that they muſt deliver up to him all the Abyſſinians that were to be found in their country taken by Maffudi in his laſt expedition, adding, that he would ſtay fifteen days there to expect his anſwer. The king of Adel, deſirous of peace, and

not a little terrified at the diſaſter of Maſſudi, hitherto reckoned invincible, gathered together all the ſlaves as ſoon as poſſible, and returned them to the king.

Naod having now, by his courage and prudence, freed himſelf from fear of a foreign war, returned home, and ſet himſelf like a wiſe prince to the reforming of the abuſes that prevailed everywhere among his people, and to the cultivation of the arts of peace. He died a natural death, after having reigned 13 years.

DAVID III.

From 1508 to 1540.

David, an Infant, ſucceeds—Queen ſends Matthew Ambaſſador to Portugal—David takes the Field—Defeat of the Moors—Arrival of an Embaſſy from Portugal—Diſaſtrous War with Adel.

THE vigorous reign of Naod had at leaſt ſuſpended the fate of the whole empire; and, had it not been that they ſtill perſiſted in that ruinous and dangerous meaſure of following minority with minority, by the election of children to the throne, it is probable this kingdom would have eſcaped the greateſt part of thoſe diſmal calamities that

that fell upon it in the ſequel. But the Iteghé Helena, and the Abuna Marcos, (now become her creature) had intereſt enough, notwithſtanding the apparent neceſſities of the times, to place David ſon of Naod upon the throne, a child of eleven years old, that they might take upon themſelves the government of the kingdom; whereas Anquo Iſrael (third ſon of Bæda Mariam) was of an age proper to govern, and whom they would have preferred to Naod for the ſame reaſon, merely becauſe he was then a child.

Besides the deſire of governing, another motive operated, which, however good in itſelf, was very criminal from the preſent circumſtances. A peace with Adel was what the empreſs Helena conſtantly deſired; for ſhe could not ſee with indifference the deſtruction of her own country, far leſs contribute to it. She was herſelf by origin a Moor, daughter of Mahomet, governor for the king in Dawaro; had been ſuſpected, ſo early as her huſband's time, of preferring the welfare of her own country to that of the kingdom of Abyſſinia.

This princeſs, perfectly informed of the intereſts of both nations, ſeems, in her whole conduct, to have acted upon the moſt judicious and ſenſible principles. She knew the country of Adel to be, by ſituation and intereſt, perfectly commercial; that part of Africa, the oppoſite Arabia, and the peninſula of the Indies, were but three partners joined in one trade; they mutually conſumed each others produce; they mutually contributed to export the joint produce of the three countries to diſtant parts of Europe, Aſia, and Africa; which three continents then conſtituted the whole known world. When Adel was at peace with Abyſſinia, then

then the latter became rich, from the gold, ivory, coffee, cattle, hides, and all manner of proviſion, procured by the former from every part of the mountainous tract above it. Trade flouriſhed and plenty followed it. The merchants carried every ſpecies of goods to the moſt diſtant provinces in ſafety, equally to the advantage of Abyſſinia and Adel. Theſe advantages, ſo ſenſibly felt, were maintained by bribery, and a conſtant circulation of Mahometan gold in the court of Abyſſinia; the kingdom, however, thus proſpered. A war with Adel, on the contrary, had its origin in a violent deſire of a barbarous people, ſuch as the Abyſſinians were, to put themſelves in poſſeſſion of riches which their neighbours had gained by trade and induſtry.

She ſaw that, even in this the worſt of caſes, nothing utterly deſtructive could poſſibly happen to the Abyſſinians; in their inroads into that country, they plundered the markets and got, at the riſk of their lives, India ſtuffs of every kind, for which elſe they would have paid money. On the other hand, the people of Adel, when conquerors, acquired no ſtuffs, no manufactures, but the perſons of the Abyſſinians themſelves, whom they carried into ſlavery, and ſold in Arabia, and all parts of Aſia, at immenſe profits. Next to gold they are the moſt agreeable and valuable merchandiſe in every part of the eaſt; and theſe again, being chiefly the idle people who delighted in war, their abſence promoted the more deſirable event of peace.

In this ſtate we ſee that war was but another ſpecies of commerce between the two countries, though peace was the moſt eligible ſtate for them both; and this the empreſs Helena had conſtantly endeavoured to maintain, but could not

not ſucceed among a people fond of war, by any other means, but by giving them a minor for their king, who was by the law of the land under her direction, as the country was, during his minority, under her regency.

ALTHOUGH this, the ordinary ſtate of the empreſs's politics, had hitherto anſwered well between the kingdoms, when no other parties were engaged, the introduction of a third power, and its influence, totally changed that ſyſtem. The Turks, an enemy not yet known in any formidable line by the ſouthern part of Africa, or Aſia, now appeared under a form that made all thoſe ſouthern ſtates tremble.

SELIM, emperor of Conſtantinople, had defeated Canſo el Gauri, Soldan of Egypt, and ſlain him in the field. After a ſecond battle he had taken Cairo, the capital of that country; and, under the ſpecious pretence of a violation of the law of nations, by Tomum Bey, the ſucceſſor, who was ſaid to have put his ambaſſadors to death, he had hanged that prince upon one of the principal gates of his own capital; and, by this execution, had totally deſtroyed the ſucceſſion of the Mamalukes. Sinan Baſha, the great general and miniſter of Selim, in a very few months over-ran all the peninſula of Arabia, to the verge of the Indian Ocean.

THESE people, trained to war, Mahomet had inſpired with enthuſiaſm, and led them to the conqueſt of the Eaſt. Trade and luxury had, after that, diſarmed and reduced them to much the ſame ſituation as, in a former age, they had been found by Auguſtus Cæſar. Sinan Baſha, with a troop of veterans, had, by degrees extirpated the native princes of the country; thoſe that reſiſted, by force; and thoſe that

ſubmitted

ſubmitted to him, by treachery; and in their place, in every principal town, he had ſubſtituted Turkiſh officers of confidence, ſtrongly ſupported by troops of Janizaries, who knew no other government but martial law.

War had now changed its form entirely under theſe new conquerors. Muſkets, and large trains of artillery, were introduced againſt javelins, lances, and arrows, the only arms then known in Arabia, and in the oppoſite continent of Abyſſinia. A large fleet, crowded with ſoldiers, and filled with military ſtores, the very name of which, as well as their deſtructive qualities, were till now unknown in theſe ſouthern regions, were employed by the Turks to extend their conqueſt to India, where, though by the ſuperior valour of the Portugueſe they were conſtantly diſappointed in their principal object, they nevertheleſs, in their paſſage outward and homeward, reinforced their ſeveral poſts in Arabia, from which they looked for aſſiſtance and protection, had any enemy placed himſelf in their way, or a ſtorm, or other unexpected misfortune, overtaken them in their return.

These Janizaries lived upon the very bowels of commerce. They had, indeed, for a ſhew of protecting it, eſtabliſhed cuſtomhouſes in their various ports; but they ſoon made it appear, that the end propoſed by theſe was only to give them a more diſtinct knowledge who were the ſubjects from whom they could levy the moſt enormous extortions. Jidda, Zibid, and Mocha, the places of conſequence neareſt to Abyſſinia on the Arabian ſhore, Suakem, a ſea-port town on the very barriers of Abyſſinia, in the immediate way of their caravan to Cairo, on the African ſide, were each under

der the command of a Turkiſh baſha, and garriſoned by Turkiſh troops ſent thither from Conſtantinople by the emperors Selim and Soliman, his ſucceſſors.

The peaceable Arabian merchants, full of that good faith which ſucceſsful commerce inſpires, fled everywhere from the violence and injuſtice of theſe Turkiſh tyrants, and landed in ſafety their riches and perſons on the oppoſite ſhore of the kingdom of Adel. The trade from India, flying from the ſame enemy, took refuge in Adel among its own correſpondents, the Mooriſh merchants, during the violent and impolitic tyranny that everywhere took place under this Turkiſh oppreſſion.

Zeyla is a ſmall iſland, on the very coaſt of Adel, oppoſite to Arabia Felix without the Straits of Babelmandeb, upon the entrance of the Indian Ocean. The Turks of Arabia, though they were blind to the cauſe, were ſenſible of the great influx of trade into the oppoſite kingdom. They took poſſeſſion, therefore, of Zeyla, where they eſtabliſhed what they called a Cuſtomhouſe, and by means of that poſt, and gallies cruiſing in the narrow Straits, they laid the Indian trade to Adel under heavy contributions, that might, in ſome meaſure, indemnify them for the great deſertion their violence and injuſtice had occaſioned in Arabia.

This ſtep threatened the very exiſtence both of Adel and Abyſſinia; and conſidering the vigorous government of the one, and the weak politics and prejudices of the other, it is more than probable the Turks would have ſubdued both Adel and Abyſſinia, had they not, in India their chief object, met the Portugueſe, ſtrongly eſtabliſhed, and governed

by a ſucceſſion of kings who had not in any age their equals, and ſeconded by officers and ſoldiers who, for diſcipline, courage, love to their country, and affection to their ſovereign were, perhaps, ſuperior to any troops, or any ſet of individuals, that, as far as we can judge from hiſtory, have ever yet appeared in the world.

It was not now a time for a woman to reign, nor, which was the ſame thing, to place a child upon the throne. The empreſs Helena ſaw this diſtinctly; but her ambition made her prefer the love of reigning to the viſible neceſſities and welfare of her country. She knew the progreſs and extent of the Portugueſe power in India; and ſaw plainly there was no proſpect, but in their aſſiſtance, at once to ſave both Abyſſinia and Adel.

Peter Covillan, ſent thither as ambaſſador by John king of Portugal, had, for two reigns, been detained in Abyſſinia, with a conſtant refuſal of leave to return. He was now become an object of curioſity rather than uſe. However, except his liberty, he had wanted nothing. The empreſs had married him nobly in the country; had given him large appointments, both as to profit and dignity. She now began to be ſenſible of the conſequence of having with her a man of his abilities, who could open to her the method of correſponding effectually both with India and Portugal in their own language, to which, as well as to the perſons to whom her letters were to be addreſſed, ſhe was then an utter ſtranger.

She had about her court an Armenian merchant named Matthew, a perſon of great truſt and diſcretion, who had

been long accuſtomed to go to the ſeveral kingdoms of the Eaſt upon mercantile commiſſions for the king and for his nobles. He had been at Cairo, Jeruſalem, Ormus, Iſpahan, and in the Eaſt Indies on the coaſt of Malabar; both in places conquered by the Portugueſe, and in thoſe that yet held out under their native Pagan princes. He was one of thoſe factors which, as I have already ſaid, are employed by the king and great men in Abyſſinia to ſell or barter, in the places above mentioned, ſuch part of their revenue as are paid them in kind.

These men are chiefly Greeks, or Armenians, but the preference is always given to the latter. Both nations pay caratch, or capitation, to the Grand Signior, (whoſe ſubjects they are) and both have, in conſequence, paſsports, protections, and liberty to trade wherever they pleaſe throughout the empire, without being liable to thoſe inſults and extortions from the Turkiſh officers that other ſtrangers are.

The Armenians, of all the people in the Eaſt, are thoſe moſt remarkable for their patience and ſobriety. They are generally maſters of moſt of the eaſtern languages; are of ſtrong, robuſt conſtitutions; of all people, the moſt attentive to the beaſts and merchandiſe they have in charge; exceedingly faithful, and content with little. This Matthew, queen Helena choſe for her ambaſſador to Portugal, and joined a young Abyſſinian with him, who died in the voyage. He was charged with letters to the king, which, with the other diſpatches, as they are long, and abound with fiction and bombaſt rather than truth and facts, I have not troubled myſelf to tranſcribe; they are, beſides, in many printed collections *.

* Vide Marmol, vol. i. cap. 37.

It appears clearly from theſe letters, that they were the joint compoſitions of Covillan, who knew perfectly the manner of correſponding with his court upon dangerous ſubjects, and of the ſimple Abyſſinian confidents of the empreſs Helena, who, unacquainted with embaſſies or correſpondence with princes, or the ill conſequence that theſe letters would be of to their ambaſſador and his errand, if they happened to be intercepted by an enemy, told plainly all they deſired and wiſhed to execute by the aſſiſtance of the Portugueſe. Thus, in the firſt part of the letter, (which we ſhall ſuppoſe dictated by Covillan) the empreſs remits the deſcription of her wants, and what is the ſubject of the embaſſy, to Matthew her ambaſſador, whom ſhe qualifies as her confidential ſervant, inſtructed in her moſt ſecret intentions; deſiring the king of Portugal to believe what he ſhall report from her to him in private, as if they were her own words uttered immediately from her to him in perſon. So far was prudent; ſuch a conduct as we ſhould expect from a man like Covillan, long accuſtomed to be truſted with the ſecret negociations of his ſovereign.

But the latter end of his diſpatches (the work, we ſuppoſe, of Abyſſinian ſtateſmen) divulges the whole ſecret. It explains the motives of this embaſſy in the cleareſt manner, deſiring the king of Portugal to ſend a ſufficient force to deſtroy Mecca and Medina; to aſſiſt them with a ſufficient number of ſhips, and to annihilate the Turkiſh power by ſea; while they, by land, ſhould extirpate all the Mahometans on their borders; and it ſtigmatizes theſe Mahometans, both Turks and Moors, with the moſt opprobrious names it was poſſible to deviſe.

With the firſt part of theſe diſpatches, it is plain, Matthew, as an envoy, might have paſſed unmoleſted; he had only to give to the ſecret wiſhes of the empreſs, with which he was charged, what kind of mercantile colour he pleaſed. But the laſt part of the letter brought home to him a charge of the deepeſt dye, both of ſacrilege and high-treaſon, that he meditated againſt the Ottoman empire, whoſe Raya* he was; and, there can be no doubt, had theſe letters been intercepted and read, Matthew's embaſſy and life would have ended together under ſome exquiſite ſpecies of torture. This, indeed, he ſeems to have apprehended; as, after his arrival in India, he conſtantly refuſed to ſhew his diſpatches, even to the Portugueſe viceroy himſelf, from whom, in the inſtant, he had received very ſingular favour and protection.

The king, when of age, never could be brought to acknowledge this embaſſy by Matthew; but, as we ſhall ſee, did conſtantly deny it. If we believe the Portugueſe, the deſpair of the empreſs was ſo great, that ſhe offered one-third of the kingdom to the king of Portugal if he relieved her. Nothing of this kind appears in the letters; but, if this offer was part of Matthew's private diſpatches, we may ſee a reaſon why David did not wiſh to own the commiſſion and offer as his.

Matthew had a ſafe paſſage to Dabul in India, but here his misfortunes began. The governor, taking him for a ſpy, confined him in cloſe priſon. But Albuquerque, then viceroy of India, reſiding at Goa, who had himſelf a deſign

* Is a ſubject paying Capitation.

upon Abyſſinia, hearing that ſuch a perſon, in ſuch a character, was arrived, ſent and took him out of the hands of the governor of Dabul, where his ſufferings elſe would not have ſo quickly ended. All the Portugueſe cried out upon ſeeing ſuch an ambaſſador as Matthew ſent to their maſter; ſometimes they pretended that he was a ſpy of the Sultan, at other times he was an impoſtor, a cook, or ſome other menial ſervant.

ALBUQUERQUE treated with him privately before he landed, to make his commiſſions known to him; but he expreſsly refuſed ſhewing any letter unleſs to the king himſelf in Portugal. This behaviour hurt him in the eyes of the viceroy, who was therefore diſpoſed, with the reſt of his officers, to ſlight him when he ſhould come aſhore. But Matthew, now out of danger, and knowing his perſon to be ſacred, would no longer be treated like a private perſon. He ſent to let the viceroy, biſhop, and clergy know, that, beſides his conſequence as an ambaſſador, which demanded their reſpect, he was the bearer of a piece of wood of the true croſs, which he carried as a preſent to the king of Portugal; and, therefore, he required them, as they would avoid an imputation of ſacrilege, to ſhew to that precious relict the utmoſt reſpect, and celebrate its arrival as a feſtival. No more was neceſſary after this. The whole ſtreets of Goa were filled with proceſſions; the troops were all under arms; the viceroy, and the principal officers, met Matthew at his landing, and conveyed him to the palace, where he was magnificently lodged and feaſted. But nothing could long overcome the prejudices the Portugueſe had imbibed upon the firſt ſight of him; and, notwithſtanding he carried a piece of the true croſs, both he and it ſoon fell into perfect oblivion:

vion: Nor was it till 1513, after he had ſtaid three years in India, that he got leave to proceed to Portugal by a fleet returning home loaded with ſpices.

Damianus Goez the hiſtorian, though apparently a man of good ſenſe and candour, cannot conjecture why this Armenian was ſent as an ambaſſador, and wiſhes to be reſolved why not an Abyſſinian nobleman. But it is obvious from the character I have already given of him, there could be nobody in the empreſs's power that had half his qualifications; and, beſides, an Abyſſinian nobleman would not have ventured to go, as knowing very well that everywhere beyond the limits of his own country he would have been without protection, and the firſt Turk in whoſe power he might have fallen would have ſold him for a ſlave. In no other character is any of his nation ſeen, either in Arabia or India, and his maſter has no treaty with any ſtate whatever. Add to this, that an Abyſſinian ſpeaks no language but his own, which is not underſtood out of his own country; and is abſolutely ignorant even of the exiſtence of other far diſtant nations.

But, beſides, there was an Abyſſinian ſent with Matthew, who died; and here Damianus Goez's wonder ſhould ceaſe.

The ſame ill-fortune, which had attended Matthew in India, followed him in his voyage to Portugal. The Captains of the ſhips contended with each other who ſhould behave worſt to him; and, in the midſt of all this ill-treatment, the ſhip which he was on board of arrived at Liſbon. The king, upon hearing the particulars of this ill uſage, immediately put the offenders in irons, where they had, probably,

probably, lain during their lives, had they not been freed by the interceſſion of Matthew.

DAVID (as I have before obſerved) was only eleven years old* when he was placed upon the throne; and, at his inauguration, took the name of Lebna Denghel, or the Virgin's Frankincenſe; then that of Etana Denghel, or the Myrrh of the Virgin; and after that, of Wanag Segued, which ſignifies Reverenced, or Feared, among the Lions, with whom, towards the laſt of his reign, he reſided in wilds and mountains more than with men.

DURING this minority, there was peace with Mahomet king of Adel. Maffudi ſtill continued his depredations; and, by his liberality, had formed ſtrong connections with the Turks in Arabia. In return for the number of ſlaves whom he had ſent to Mecca, a green ſilk ſtandard, (that of Mahomet and of the Faith), and a tent of black velvet, embroidered with gold, were ſent him by the Sherriffe, the greateſt honour a Mahometan could poſſibly receive, and he was alſo made Shekh of the iſland of Zeyla, which was delivering the key of Abyſſinia to him.

IT was not till David had arrived at ſixteen years of age that the conſtant ſucceſs of Maffudi, the honours beſtowed upon him, and the gain which accrued from all his expeditions, had at laſt determined the king of Adel to break the peace with Abyſſinia, and join him. Theſe princes, with the whole Mahometan force, had fallen together upon Dawaro,

* Vid. David's letter to Emanuel, king of Portugal 1524.

Dawaro, Ifat, and Fatigar; and, in one year, had driven away, and ſlain, above nineteen thouſand Chriſtians, ſubjects to the king. A terror was now ſpread over the whole kingdom, and great blame laid both upon the empreſs and the king, for ſitting and looking timidly on, while the Turks and Moors, year after year, ravaged whole provinces without reſiſtance.

THESE murmurs at laſt rouſed David, who, for his own part, had not ſuffered them willingly ſo long. He determined immediately to raiſe an army, and to command it in perſon: In vain the empreſs admoniſhed him of his danger, and his abſolute want of experience in matters of war; in vain ſhe adviſed him to employ ſome of the old officers againſt the veteran Mooriſh troops.

THE king anſwered, That every officer of merit had been tried already, and baffled from beginning to end, ſo that the army had no confidence in them; that he was reſolved to take his trial as the others had done, and leave the event where it ought to be left. Though the diviners all propheſied ill from this reſolution of the king, the generality of the kingdom, and young nobility, flocked to his ſtandard, rejoicing in a leader ſo near their own age. The middle-aged had great hopes of the vigour of that youth; and the old were not more backward, ſatisfied of the weight their years and experience muſt give them in the councils of a young king.

SELDOM a better army took the field; and the empreſs, from her own treaſures, furniſhed every thing, even to ſuperfluity, engaging all the people of conſequence by giving them

in the moſt affable manner, preſents in hand, and magnificent promiſes of recompence hereafter. Great as theſe preparations were, they had not made much impreſſion among the confederates in Adel; and already the king had put himſelf at the head of his army, before the Moors ſeemed to think it worth their while to follow him. They were, indeed, at that very time, laying waſte a part of the kingdom of Abyſſinia. The king, then, by quick marches, advanced through Fatigar, as if he was going to Auſſa, the capital of Adel.

Between Fatigar and the plain country of Adel there is a deep large valley, through which it was neceſſary the army ſhould paſs. Very ſteep mountains bound it on every ſide, whilſt two openings (each of them very narrow) were the only paſſages by which it was poſſible to enter or go out. The king divided his army into two; he kept the beſt troops and largeſt body with himſelf, and ſent Betwudet with the reſt, as if they intended to fight the enemy before they gained the defiles. The Moors, on the other hand, terrified at what muſt happen if the king with his army marched into their defenceleſs country, accounted it a great eſcape to get into theſe very defiles before they were forced to an engagement. Betwudet, who deſired no more, gave them their way, and, entering the valley behind them, encamped there. The king, at the other end, had done the ſame, unſeen by the enemy, who thought he was advanced on his march to Auſſa. The Moors were thus completely hemmed in, and the king's army vaſtly ſuperior. He had ordered his tents to be left ſtanding, with a body of troops in them, and theſe completely covered the only outlet to the

valley, whilſt Betwudet and his party had advanced conſiderably, and made much the ſame diſpoſition.

The king drew up his troops early in the morning, and offered the enemy battle, when the whole Abyſſinian army was ſurpriſed to diſcover a backwardneſs in the Moors ſo unlike their behaviour at former times; well they might, when they were informed from whom that panic among the Moors came. Maffudi, a fanatic from the beginning, whether really deceived by ſuch a prophecy, or raiſed to a pitch of pride and enthuſiaſm by the honours he had received, and deſirous, by a remarkable death, to deſerve the rank of martyr among thoſe of his own religion, or from whatever cauſe it aroſe, came to the king of Adel, and told him, that his time was now come; that it had been propheſied to him long ago, that if, that year, he fought the king of Abyſſinia in perſon, he was there to loſe his life: That he knew, for certain, David was then preſent, having, with his own eyes, ſeen the ſcarlet tent, (a colour which is only uſed by the king); he deſired, therefore, the king of Adel to make the beſt of his way through a leſs ſteep part of the mountain, which he ſhewed him; to take his family and favourites along with him, and leave under his command the army to try their fortune with David. Mahomet, at no time very fond of fighting, never found himſelf leſs ſo than upon this advice of Maffudi's. He reſolved, therefore, to follow his council; and, before the battle began, withdrew himſelf through the place that was ſhewn him, and was followed by a few of his friends.

It was now 9 o'clock, and the ſun began to be hot, before which the Abyſſinians never chooſe to engage, when

Maſſudi, judging the king of Adel was beyond danger, ſent a trumpet to the Abyſſinian camp, with a challenge to any man of rank in the army to fight him in ſingle combat, under condition that the victory ſhould be accounted to belong to that army whoſe champion was victorious, and that, thereupon, both parties ſhould withdraw their troops without further bloodſhed. It does not appear whether the conditions were agreed to, but the challenge was accepted as ſoon as offered. Gabriel Andreas the monk, who, in the reign of Naod, had, by the king's order, loſt a part of his tongue for giving it too much licence, offered himſelf firſt to the king, beſeeching him to truſt to him that day, his own honour, and the fortune of the army. The king conſented without heſitation, with the general applauſe of all the nobility; for Andreas, though a monk, was a man of great family and diſtinction; the moſt learned of the court; liberal, rich, affable, and remarkable for facetious converſation; he was, beſides, a good ſoldier, of tried ſkill and valour, and, in ſtrength and activity, ſurpaſſed by no man in the army.

Maffudi was not backward to preſent himſelf; nor was the combat longer than might be expected from two ſuch willing champions. Gabriel Andreas, ſeeing his opportunity, with a two-handed ſword ſtruck Maffudi between the lower part of the neck and the ſhoulder, ſo violently, that he nearly divided his body into two, and felled him dead to the ground. He then cut his head off, and threw it at the king's feet, ſaying, "There is the Goliah of the Infidels."

This expreſſion became inſtantly the word of battle, or ſignal to charge. The king, at the head of his troops, ruſhed

upon the Mooriſh army, and, throwing them into diſorder, drove them back upon Betwudet, who, with his freſh troops, forced them again back to the king. Seeing no hopes of relief, they diſperſed to the mountains, and were ſlaughtered, and hunted like wild beaſts by the peaſants, or driven to periſh with thirſt and hunger. About 12,000 of the Mahometan army are ſaid to have been ſlain upon the field, with no very conſiderable loſs on the ſide of the conquerors. The green ſtandard of Mahomet was taken, as alſo the black velvet tent embroidered with gold; which laſt, we ſhall ſee, the king gave to the Portugueſe ambaſſador ſome time afterwards, to conſecrate and ſay maſs in. A vaſt number of cattle was taken, and with them much rich merchandiſe of the Indies. Nor did the king content himſelf with what he had got in battle. He advanced and encamped at a place where was held the firſt market of Adel*. The next day he proceeded to a town where was a houſe of the king, and, going up to the door, and finding it locked, he ſtruck the door with his lance, and nobody anſwering, he prohibited the ſoldiers from plundering it, and retired with his army home, leaving his lance ſticking in the door as a ſign of his having been there, and having had it in his power.

Though the king was received on his return amidſt the greateſt acclamations of his ſubjects, as the ſaviour of his country, the eyes of the whole nation and army were firſt fixed on Andreas, whoſe bravery had at laſt delivered them from that conſtant and inveterate ſcourge, Maffudi. Every body preſſed forward to throw flowers and green branches in his way; the women celebrating him with ſongs, putting garlands on his head, and holding out the young children to ſee him as he paſſed. The battle was fought in the month

* Vide Map of Shoa.

month of July 1516; and, the ſame day, the iſland of Zeyla, in the mouth of the Red Sea, was taken, and its town burned by the Portugueſe armament, under Lopez Suarez Alberguiera.

Neither the ſuſpicions tranſmitted from India, nor the mean perſon of Matthew the ambaſſador, ſeem to have made any impreſſion upon the king of Portugal. He received him with every ſort of honour, and teſtified the moſt profound reſpect for his maſter, and attention to the errand he came upon. Matthew was lodged and maintained with the utmoſt ſplendour; and, conſidering the great uſe of ſo powerful a friend on the African coaſt of the Red Sea, where his fleets would meet with all ſort of proviſion and protection, while they purſued the Turkiſh ſquadrons, he prepared an embaſſy on his part, and ſent Matthew home on board the fleet commanded by Lopez Suarez for India.

Edward Galvan, a man of capacity and experience, who had filled the offices of ſecretary of ſtate and ambaſſador in Spain, France, and Germany, arrived at that time of life when he might reaſonably expect to paſs the reſt of his days in eaſe, wealth, and honour, found himſelf unexpectedly choſen, at the age of eighty-ſix, to go ambaſſador from his ſovereign to Abyſſinia. Goez had much more reaſon to wonder at the ambaſſador fixed upon by his maſter, than at that of Abyſſinia ſent by the empreſs Helena to Portugal. The fleet under Suarez entered the Red Sea, and anchored at the flat iſland of Camaran, cloſe on the coaſt of Arabia Felix, one of the moſt unwholeſome places he could have choſen. Here Edward Galvan died; and here Suarez, moſt ignorantly, reſolved to paſs the winter, which he did, ſuffering

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ing much for want of every ſort of proviſion but water; whereas twenty-four hours of any wind would have carried him to Maſuah, to his journey's end; where, if he had loſt the monſoon, he would ſtill have had great abundance of neceſſaries, and been in the way every moment of promoting the wiſhes of his maſter.

Lopez de Segueyra ſucceeded the ignorant Suarez, who had returned to India. He fitted out a ſtrong fleet at Goa, with which he entered the Red Sea, and ſailed for the iſland of Maſuah, where he arrived the 16th of April 1520, having Matthew along with him. Upon the firſt approach of the fleet, the inhabitants, both of the iſland and town, abandoned them, and fled to Arkeeko on the main land. Segueyra having remained before Maſuah a few days without committing any hoſtilities, there came at laſt to him a Chriſtian and a Moor from the continent; who informed him that the main-land, then before him, was part of the kingdom of Abyſſinia, governed by an officer called Baharnagaſh: they added, that the reaſon of their flying at the ſight of the fleet was, that the Turks frequently made deſcents, and ravaged the iſland; but that all the inhabitants of the continent were Chriſtians. The Portugueſe general was very joyful on this intelligence, and began to treat Matthew more humanely, finding how truly and exactly he had deſcribed theſe places. He gave, both to the Chriſtian and Moor that came off to him, a rich veſt; commended them for having fled to Arkeeko rather than expoſe themſelves to an attack from the Turks, but directed them to aſſure the people on the continent, that they too were all Chriſtians, and under the command of the king of Abyſſinia; being arrived there

there purpoſely for his ſervice, ſo that they might return, whenever they ſhould pleaſe, in perfect ſafety.

The next day, came down to the ſhore the governor of Arkeeko, accompanied with thirty horſemen, and above two hundred foot. He was mounted on a fine horſe, and dreſſed in a kind of ſhirt reſembling that of the Moors. The governor brought down four oxen, and received in return certain pieces of ſilk, with which he was well pleaſed. A very familiar converſation followed; the governor kindly inviting the Portugueſe general aſhore, aſſuring him that the Baharnagaſh, under whoſe command he was, had already intelligence of his arrival.

In anſwer to his inquiries about the religion of the country, the governor told him, that in a mountain, then in ſight, twenty-four miles diſtant, there was a convent called *the Monaſtery of Biſan*, (which Matthew had often deſcribed in the voyage) whoſe monks, being informed of his arrival, had deputed ſeven of their number to wait upon him, whom the Portugueſe general went to meet accordingly, and received them in the kindeſt manner.

These monks, as ſoon as they ſaw Matthew, broke out into the warmeſt expreſſions of friendſhip and eſteem, congratulating him with tears in their eyes upon his long voyage and abſence. The Portugueſe general then invited the monks on board his veſſel, where he regaled them, and gave to each preſents that were moſt ſuitable to their auſtere life. On his ſide, Segueyra choſe ſeven Portugueſe, with Peter Gomez Teſſera, auditor of the Eaſt Indies, who underſtood Arabic very well, to return the viſit of the monks, and ſee the monaſtery

naſtery of Biſan. This ſhort journey they very happily performed. Teſſera brought back a parchment manuſcript, which he received as a preſent from the monks, to be ſent to the king of Portugal.

It was on the 24th of April that the Baharnagaſh arrived at Arkeeko, having before ſent information of his intended viſit. The Portugueſe general, who never doubted but that he would come to the ſea-ſide, pitched his tents, and ſpread his carpets and cuſhions on the ground to receive him. But it was ſignified to him from the Baharnagaſh, who was probably afraid of putting himſelf under the guns of the fleet, that he did not intend to advance ſo far, and that the governor ſhould meet him half way. This being agreed to on both ſides, they ſat down on the graſs.

The Baharnagaſh began the converſation, by telling the Portugueſe, they had, in virtue of certain prophecies, been long expected in this country; and that he, and all the officers of Abyſſinia, were ready to do them every ſervice and kindneſs. After the Portugueſe general had returned a proper anſwer, the prieſts and monks concluded the interview with certain religious ſervices. Segueyra then made the Baharnagaſh a preſent of a very fine ſuit of complete armour with ſome pieces of ſilk; while the Baharnagaſh, on his ſide, made the return with a very fine horſe and mule.

All doubt concerning Matthew was removed at this interview; he was acknowledged as a genuine ambaſſador. The Portugueſe now flocked to Segueyra, beſeeching him to chooſe from among his men, who ſhould accom-

pany him to the court. The firſt ſtep was to name Roderigo de Lima ambaſſador from the king of Portugal, inſtead of Galvan, who was dead; and, for his ſuite, George de Breu, Lopez de Gama, John Scolare ſecretary to the ambaſſador, John Gonſalvez his factor and interpreter, Emmanuel de Mare organiſt, Peter Lopez, Maſter John his phyſician, Gaſpar Pereira, and Lazarus d'Andrad a painter. The three chaplains were John Fernandes, Peter Alphonſo Mendez, and Franciſco Alvarez. In this company alſo went Matthew, the Abyſſinian ambaſſador returned from Portugal, and with him three Portugueſe, one called Magailanes, the other Alvaremgo, and the third Diego Fernandes.

It ſeemed probable, the ſevere blow which David had given to the king of Adel, by the total deſtruction of his army on the death of his general Maffudi, would have procured a ceſſation of hoſtilities to the Abyſſinian frontiers, which they had not experienced during the life of that general; but it appeared afterwards, that, increaſed in riches and population by the great acceſſion of power which followed the interruption of the Indian trade in Arabia by the Turkiſh conqueſt, far from entertaining thoughts of peace, they were rather meditating a more formidable manner of attack, by training themſelves to the uſe of fire-arms and artillery, of which they had provided a quantity, and to which the Abyſſinians were as yet ſtrangers.

The king was encamped in Shoa, covering and keeping in awe his Mahometan provinces, Fatigar and Dawaro; beſides which he ſeemed to have no object but the conqueſt of the Dobas, that bordered equally upon the Mooriſh and Chriſtian frontiers, and who (though generally gained by the

the Mahometans) were, when occaſion offered, enemies to both. The Shum * of Giannamora, a ſmall diſtrict belonging to Abyſſinia, full of brave ſoldiers, and conſiderably reinforced by David for the very purpoſe, had the charge of bringing theſe barbarians to ſubjection, as being their immediate neighbour.

The king had afterwards advanced eaſtward to the frontiers of Fatigar, but was ſtill in the ſouthern part of his dominions. The ambaſſador and his retinue were landed on the north. They were to croſs the whole extent of the empire through woods and over mountains, the like of which are not known in Europe, full of ſavage beaſts, and men more ſavage than the beaſts themſelves; interſected by large rivers, and what was the worſt circumſtance, ſwelling every day by the tropical rains. Frequently deſerts of no conſiderable length, indeed, intervened, where no ſuſtenance was to be found for man or beaſt, nor relief for accidental misfortunes. Yet ſuch was the bravery of that ſmall company, that they heſitated not a moment to undertake this enterpriſe. Every thing was thought eaſy which contributed to the glory of their king, and the honour of their country.

It was not long before this gallant company found need of all their conſtancy and courage; for in their ſhort journey to the convent of St Michael (the firſt they attempted) they found the wood ſo thick that there was ſcarcely paſſage for either man or beaſt. Briers and thorns, too, of a

* Or Governor.

variety of ſpecies, which they had never before ſeen, added greatly to the fatigue which the thickneſs of the woods had occaſioned. Mountains preſented themſelves over mountains, broken into terrible precipices and ravines, by violent torrents and conſtant ſtorms; their black and bare tops ſeemed as it were calcined by the rays of a burning ſun, and by inceſſant lightnings and thunder. Great numbers of wild beaſts alſo preſented themſelves everywhere in theſe dark foreſts, and ſeemed only to be hindered from devouring them by their wonder at ſeeing ſo many men in ſo lonely a ſituation. At laſt the woods began to grow thinner, and ſome fields appeared where the people were ſitting armed, guarding their ſmall flocks of half-ſtarved goats and kine, and crops of millet, of which they ſaw a conſiderable quantity ſown. The men were black, their hair very gracefully plaited, and were altogether naked, excepting a ſmall piece of leather that covered their middle. At this place they were met by twelve monks, four of whom were diſtinguiſhed by their advanced years and the reſpect paid to them by the others.

HAVING reſted their mules and camels a ſhort time, they again began their journey by the ſide of a great lake, near which was a very high mountain, and this they were too weary to attempt to paſs. Full of diſcontent and deſpondency, they halted at the foot of this mountain, where they paſſed the night, having received a cow for ſupper, a preſent from the convent. Here Matthew (the ambaſſador) ſeparated his baggage from that of the caravan, and left it to the care of the monks. He had probably made ſome little money in Portugal; and, diſtruſting his reception with the king, wiſely determined to place it out of danger. The pre-

caution, however, proved ſuperfluous; for, a few days after, an epidemical fever began to manifeſt itſelf, which, in eight-and-forty hours, carried off Matthew, and ſoon after Pereira, the ſervant of Don Roderigo; ſo that no opportunity now offered for an explanation with the king about his or the empreſs's promiſe of ceding one-third of the kingdom to the Portugueſe in caſe the king would ſend them ſuccour. Terrified by the fever, and the bad proſpect of the weather, they reſumed their journey.

The monaſtery of Biſan (to which they were now going) is ſo called from the great quantity of water which is everywhere found about it. The ſimilitude of ſound has made Poncet*, and ſeveral other travellers, call it the Monaſtery of the Viſion; but Biſan (water) is its true name, being plentifully ſupplied with that moſt valuable element. A number of lakes and rivers are interſperſed through its plains; while abundant ſprings, that are never dry, flow from the top of each rock, daſhing their rills againſt the rugged projections of the cliffs below.

The monaſtery of Biſan, properly ſo called, is the head of ſix others in the compaſs of 26 miles; each convent placed like a tower on the top of its own rock. That upon which Biſan is ſituated is very high, and almoſt perpendicular; and from this riſes another ſtill higher than it, which, unleſs to its inhabitants, is perfectly inacceſſible. It is, on every ſide, ſurrounded with wood, interſperſed with fruit-trees of many different kinds, as well of thoſe known as of thoſe unknown

* Vide Poncet's travels, in his return through Tigré, p. 116. London edit. 12mo. 1709.

unknown in Europe. Oranges, citrons, and limes are in great abundance; wild peaches and ſmall figs of a very indifferent quality; black grapes, on loaded branches, hang down from the barren timber round which they are twined, and afford plentiful ſupply to man and beaſt: The fields are covered with myrtles and many ſpecies of jeſſamin; with roſes too of various colours; but fragrance is denied to them all, except one ſort, which is the white one, ſingle-leafed *.

THE monks of theſe convents were ſaid once to be about a thouſand in number. They have a large territory, and pay a tribute in cows and horſes to the Baharnagaſh, who is their ſuperior. Their horſes are eſteemed good, as coming from the neighbourhood of the Arabs. However, though I had the abſolute choice of them all during the time I commanded the king's guard, I never could draw from that part of the country above a ſcore of ſufficient ſtrength and ſize to bear a man in complete armour.

I SHALL now leave Don Roderigo to purſue his journey towards the king at Shoa. The hiſtory of it, and of his embaſſy, publiſhed at large by Alvarez his chāplain, has not met, from the hiſtorians of his own country, with a reception which favours the authenticity of its narrative. There are, indeed, in the whole of it, and eſpecially where religion is concerned, many things very difficult of belief, which ſeem to be the work of the Jeſuits ſome years poſterior to the time in which Alvarez was in Abyſſinia. Tellez condemns him, though a writer of thoſe times; and Damianus Goez,

* In Barbary called *Miſhta*, in Abyſſinia, *Kagga*.

Goez, one of the firſt hiſtorians, ſays, that he had ſeen a journal written in Alvarez's own name, very different from the journal that is gone forth to the public. For my part, I can only ſay, that what is related of the firſt audience with the king, and many of the following pages, ſeem to me to be fabrications of people that never have been in Abyſſinia; and, if this is the caſe, no imputation can be laid againſt Franciſco Alvarez, as, perhaps, he is not the author of the miſrepreſentation in queſtion. But, as to the cordiality with which the Catholic religion was received by the monks and people in general, during the long ſtay and bad reception Don Roderigo met with, I have no ſort of doubt that this is a falſehood, and this muſt be charged directly to his account.

We have already ſeen that, early as Zara Jacob's time, the religion of the Franks was held in the utmoſt deteſtation, and that in Bæda Mariam's reign the whole country was in rebellion, becauſe the king had directed the Virgin Mary to be painted by one Branca Leon, a Venetian painter, then alive, and in court, when Don Roderigo de Lima was with the king in Shoa. Iſcander and Naod were both ſtrict in the tenets of the church of Alexandria; and two Abunas, Imaranha Chriſtos, who lived till Iſcander's time, and Abuna Marcus, alive in Alvarez's, had given no allowance for ſtrange or foreign worſhip to be introduced. How the Catholic could be ſo favourably and generally received in the time of Alvarez is what I cannot conceive. Blood enough was ſpilt immediately afterwards, to ſhew that this affection to the Roman Catholic religion, if any ſuch there was in Alvarez's time, muſt have been merely tranſitory. When, therefore, I find any thing in this journal plainly miſunder-

ſtood, I explain and vindicate it; where I ſee there is a fact deliberately miſrepreſented, ſuch as the celebration of the Epiphany, I refute it from ocular demonſtration. The reſt of the journal I leave *in medio* to the judgment of my reader, who will find it at his bookſeller's; only obſerving, that there can be no doubt that the journey itſelf was made by Don Roderigo, and the perſons named with him.

I HAVE preſerved the ſeveral ſtations of theſe travellers in my map, though a great part of the countries through which they paſſed is now in the hands of the Galla, and is as inacceſſible to Abyſſinians as it is to ſtrangers.

THERE are two particulars in Alvarez's account of this journey which very much ſurpriſe me. The firſt is, the daily and conſtant danger this company was in from tigers, ſo daring as to preſent themſelves within pike-length. Of this I have taken notice in the appendix when ſpeaking of the hyæna.

THE other particular relates to the field of beans through which they paſſed. I never yet ſaw this ſort of grain, or pulſe, in Abyſſinia. The lupine, a wild plant, ſomewhat ſimilar, chiefly infects thoſe provinces from which the honey comes, and is regarded there with the utmoſt averſion. The reaſon of which will be ſeen in the ſequel. But as theſe Mahometans, through whoſe country Don Roderigo paſſed, are not indigenous, and never had any connection with the ancient ſtate of manners or religion of this country, it is more than probable the cultivation of the bean is no older than the ſettlement of theſe Mahometans here, long after the

the Pythagorean prejudices againſt that plant were forgotten.

It was on the 16th of April 1520 that Don Roderigo de Lima landed in Abyſſinia; and it was the 16th of October of the ſame year when he arrived within ſight of the king's camp, diſtant about three miles. The king had advanced, as hath been ſaid, into Fatigar, about twenty-five miles from the firſt fair in the kingdom of Adel, and ſomething leſs than two hundred from the port of Zeyla. The ambaſſador, after ſo painful a journey, expected an immediate admiſſion into the king's preſence. Inſtead of which, a great officer, called *the Hadug Ras**, which is chief or commander of the aſſes, was ſent to carry him three miles farther diſtant, where they ordered him to pitch his tent, and five years paſſed in the embaſſy afterwards before he procured his diſmiſſion.

Alvarez accounts very lamely for this prodigious interval of time; and, excepting the celebration of the Epiphany, he does not mention one remarkable occurrence in the whole of this period. One would imagine their ſtay had not been above a month, and that one converſation only paſſed upon buſineſs, which I ſhall here ſet down as a ſpecimen of the humour the parties were in the one with the other.

The king carried the ambaſſador to ſee the church Mecana Selaſſé, the church of the Trinity, which was then repairing, where many of the kings had been buried while

* This is a name of humility. He is a great officer, and has no care or charge of aſſes.

the Royal family reſided in Shoa. All the churches in Abyſſinia are thatched. Some of Roderigo's own retinue, who bore him ill-will, had put it into the king's head how elegant this church would be if covered with lead, a thing he certainly could have no idea of. He aſked Don Roderigo, whether the king of Portugal could not ſend him as much ſheet-lead as would ſerve to cover that church? To which the ambaſſador replied, That the king of Portugal, upon bare mentioning the thing, would ſend him as much ſheet-lead* as would cover not only that church, but all the other churches he ſhould ever build in Abyſſinia; and, after all, the preſent would be but a trifling one.

Immediately upon this the king changed his diſcourſe; and obſerved to the ambaſſador, in a very ſerious tone of voice, "That, ſince they were now upon the ſubject of preſents, he could not help letting the king of Portugal know, that, if ever he ſent an ambaſſador again into that country, he ſhould take care to accompany him with preſents of value, for otherwiſe ſtranger ambaſſadors that ventured to come before him without theſe were very ill received." To which the ambaſſador returned warmly, "That it was very far from being the cuſtom of the king of Portugal to ſend preſents to any king upon earth; that, having no ſuperior, it was uſual for him, only to receive them from others, and to accept them or not, according to his royal pleaſure; for it was infinitely below him to conſider what was the value of the preſent itſelf. He then deſired the king of Abyſſinia might be informed, that he, Don Roderigo, came ambaſſador from the general of the Indies, and not from the king of Portugal; nevertheleſs, when the king of Portugal had lately diſpatched

* Alvarez Hiſtojre d'Ethjopjc. p. 157.

ed Galvan, who had died upon the road, ambaſſador to his highneſs, he had ſent with him preſents to the value of 100,000 ducats, conſulting his own greatneſs, but not conſidering himſelf as under any obligation to ſend any preſents at all; and as to the many ſcandalous aſperſions that had been thrown upon him by mean people, which the king had given credit to, and were made conſtantly part of his diſcourſe, he wiſhed his highneſs, from the peruſal of the letters which he had brought from the general of the Indies, to learn, that the Portugueſe were not accuſtomed to uſe lying and diſſimulation in their converſations, but to tell the naked truth; to whichhe the ambaſſador had ſtrictly confined himſelf in every circumſtance he had related to his highneſs, if he pleaſed to believe him; if not, that he was very welcome to do juſt whatever he thought better in his own eyes. Yet he would, once for all, have his highneſs to know, that, though he came only as ambaſſador from the general of the Indies, he could, as ſuch, have preſented himſelf before the greateſt ſovereign upon earth, without being ſubjected to hear ſuch converſation as he had been daily expoſed to from his highneſs, which he, as a Portugueſe nobleman and a ſoldier, though he had been no ambaſſador at all, was not any way diſpoſed to ſuffer, and therefore he deſired his immediate diſmiſſion."

Upon this the king ſaid, "That the diſtinction he had ſhewn him was ſuch as he would never have met with from any of his predeceſſors, having brought no preſent of any value." To which the ambaſſador replied in great warmth, "That he had received no diſtinction in this country whatever, but only injuries and wrongs; that he ſhould think he became a martyr if he died in this country where

he had been robbed of every thing, except the clothes upon his back; that Matthew, who was but a pretended ambaſſador, had been much otherwiſe treated by the king of Portugal; but for himſelf he deſired nothing but a ſpeedy diſmiſſion, having delivered his letters and done his errand: Till that time, he ſhould expect to be treated like a man of honour, above lying or falſehood." To this the king anſwered, "That he believed him to be a man of honour, worth, and veracity, but that Matthew was a liar: at the ſame time he wiſhed Don Roderigo to know, that he was perfectly informed what degree of reſpect and good uſage Matthew had met with from the king of Portugal's officers and captains, but that he did not impute this to Don Roderigo."

THERE was a rumour at court which very much alarmed the ambaſſador; it was, that the king intended to detain him according to the invariable cuſtom and practice of his country. Two Venetians, Nicholas Branca Leon and Thomas Gradinego, had been forcibly detained ſince the reign of Bæda Mariam. But what terrified Don Roderigo ſtill more, as a caſe moſt ſimilar to his, was the ſight of Peter Covillan then in court, who had been ſent ambaſſador by John king of Portugal to Iſcander, and ever ſince was detained without being able to get leave to return, but was obliged to marry and ſettle in the country.

WHAT was the emperor's real intention is impoſſible now to know; but, having reſolved to ſend an Abyſſinian ambaſſador to the king of Portugal, it was neceſſary to diſmiſs Don Roderigo likewiſe. However, he did not entirely abandon the whole of his deſign, but forcibly detained Maſter John the ſecretary, and Lazarus d'Andrad the painter, and obliged

obliged Don Roderigo to depart without them. Zaga Zaab, an Abyſſinian monk, who had learned the Portugueſe language by waiting on Don Roderigo during his ſtay in Abyſſinia, was choſen for the function; and they ſet out together for Maſuah, plentifully furniſhed with every thing neceſſary for the journey, and arrived ſafely there without any remarkable occurrence, where they found Don Hector de Silveyra, governor of the Indies, with his fleet, waiting to carry Don Roderigo de Lima home. Whether the king had changed his mind or not is doubtful; but, on the 27th of April 1526, arrived four meſſengers from court with orders for Don Roderigo to return, and alſo to bring Don Hector along with him. This was immediately and directly refuſed; but it was left in the power of Zaga Zaab to return if he pleaſed, who however declared, that, if he ſtaid behind, he ſhould be thrown to the lions. He, therefore, went on board with great readineſs, and they all ſailed from Maſuah on the 28th of April of the year juſt mentioned, in their return to India.

These frequent intercourſes with the Portugueſe had given great alarm to the Mahometan powers, though neither the king of Abyſſinia, nor the Portugueſe themſelves, had reaped any profit from them, or the ſeveral fleets that had arrived at Maſuah, which had really no end but to ſeek the ambaſſador Don Roderigo. The ſix years ſpent in wrangling and childiſh behaviour, both on the part of the king and the ambaſſador, had an appearance of ſomething ſerious between the two powers; and what ſtill alarmed the Moors more was, that no part of the ſecret had tranſpired, becauſe no ſcheme had really been concerted, only mere propoſals of vain and idle enterpriſes, without either power or will.

will to put them in execution. Such were the plans of a joint army, to attack Arabia, and to conquer it down to Jeruſalem. The Turks* were on their progreſs ſouthward in great force; they had conquered Arabia in leſs than half the time Don Roderigo had ſpent quarrelling with the king about pepper and mules; and a ſtorm was ready to break in a quarter leaſt expected.

In the gentle reigns of the Mamalukes, before the conqueſt of Egypt and Arabia by Selim†, a caravan conſtantly ſet out from Abyſſinia directly for Jeruſalem. They had then a treaty with the Arabs. This caravan rendezvouſed at Hamazen, a ſmall territory abounding in proviſions, about two days journey from Dobarwa, and nearly the ſame from Maſuah; it amounted ſometimes in number to a thouſand pilgrims, eccleſiaſtics as well as laymen. They travelled by very eaſy journies, not above ſix miles a-day, halting to perform divine ſervice, and ſetting up their tents early, and never beginning to travel till towards nine in the morning. They had, hitherto, paſſed in perfect ſafety, with drums beating and colours flying, and, in this way, traverſed the deſert by the road of Suakem.

The year after Selim had taken poſſeſſion of Cairo, Abba Azerata Chriſtos, a monk famous for holineſs, had conducted fifteen hundred of theſe pilgrims with him to Jeruſalem, and they had arrived without accident; but, on their return, they had fallen in with a body of Selim's troops, who ſlew a great part of them, and forced others to take refuge

* Canſo el Gauri, and Tomum Bey. † Selim I. emperor of the Ottomans.

refuge in the deſert, where they periſhed with hunger and thirſt. In the year 1525, another caravan aſſembled at Hamazen, conſiſting of 336 friars and prieſts, and fifteen nuns. They ſet out from Hamazen on the 12th day after leaving this place, travelling ſlowly; and, being loaded with proviſions and water, they were attacked by the Moors of that diſtrict, and utterly defeated and robbed. Of the pilgrims taken priſoners, all the old men were put to the ſword, and the young were ſold for ſlaves; ſo that of 336 perſons fifteen only eſcaped, but three of which lived to return to Shoa at the time the ambaſſador was there. This was the firſt vengeance the Moors to the northward had yet taken for the alliance made with the Portugueſe; and, from this time, the communication with Cairo through the deſert ceaſed as to the Chriſtians, and was carried on by Mahometans only.

Since the time of Peter Covillan's arrival in Abyſſinia, the views of all parties had very much changed. The Portugueſe at firſt coveted the friendſhip of Abyſſinia, for the ſake of obtaining through it a communication with India. But they now became indifferent about that intercourſe, ſince they had ſettled in India itſelf, and found the convenience of the paſſage of the Cape of Good Hope. David, freed from his fears of the Moors of Adel, whom he had defeated, and ſeeing the great power of the Turks, ſo much apprehended after the conqueſt of Egypt, diſappointed in India in all their attempts againſt the Portugueſe ſettlements there; being, moreover, diſpleaſed with the abrupt behaviour of the ambaſſador Don Roderigo, and the promiſes the empreſs Helena had made by Matthew without his knowledge, he wiſhed no further connection with the Portu-

gueſe, for whoſe aſſiſtance, he thought, he ſhould have no uſe.

Selim, whoſe firſt object was the conqueſt of India, had met there ſo rude a reception that he began to deſpair of further ſucceſs in his undertaking; but, having conquered Arabia on one ſide of the Red Sea, he was deſirous of extending his dominions to the other alſo, and for three reaſons: The firſt was, that the ſafety of the holy place of Mecca would be much endangered ſhould a Portugueſe army and fleet rendezvous in Abyſſinia, and be joined by an army there. The ſecond, that his ſhips and gallies could not be in ſecurity at the bottom of the Gulf, ſhould the Portugueſe obtain leave to fortify any iſland or harbour belonging to the Abyſſinians. The third, that the king of Abyſſinia being, as he was taught to believe, the prince whom the prophet Mahomet had honoured with his correſpondence, he thought it a duty incumbent upon him to convert this prince and kingdom to the Mahometan religion by the ſword, a method allowable in no religion but that of Mahomet and of Rome.

The ancient and feeble arms of lances and bows, carried by half-naked peaſants aſſembled in haſte and at random for an occaſion, were now laid aſide. In place of theſe, Selim had left garriſons of veteran troops in all the ſea-coaſt towns of Arabia, exerciſed in fire-arms, and furniſhed with large trains of artillery, ſupported by a large fleet which, though deſtined againſt the Portugueſe in India, and conſtantly beat by them, never failed, both going and coming, to reinforce their poſts in Arabia with ſtores and freſh ſoldiers.

THE empreſs Helena died in 1525, the year before the Portugueſe embaſſy ended, after having brought about an interview between the two nations, which, by the continual diſavowal of Matthew's embaſſy, it is plain that David knew not how to turn to his advantage. Soon after her death, the king prepared to renew the war with the Moors, without having received the leaſt advantage from the Portugueſe. But very differently had the people of Adel employed this interval of peace. They had ſtrengthened themſelves by the ſtricteſt friendſhip with the Turkiſh officers in Arabia, eſpecially with the baſha of Zibit, a large trading port nearly oppoſite to Maſuah. A Turkiſh garriſon was put into Zeyla; and a Turk, with a large train of artillery, commanded in it. All was ready againſt the firſt invaſion the king was to make, and he was now marching directly towards their country.

THE firſt retaliation, for the Portugueſe friendſhip, (as we have already obſerved) had been the cutting off the caravan for Jeruſalem. In revenge for this, the king had marched into Dawaro, and ſent a body of troops from that province to ſee what was the ſtate of the Mooriſh forces in Adel. Theſe were no ſooner arrived on the frontiers of that kingdom, than they were met by a number of the enemy appointed to guard thoſe confines, and, coming to blows, the Abyſſinians defeated, and drove them into the deſert parts of their own country. The king ſtill advanced till he met the Mahometan army, and a battle was fought at Shimbra Coré, where the Abyſſinian army was totally defeated; the Betwudet, Hadug Ras, the governor of Amhara, Robel, governor of the mountain of Geſhen, with the greateſt part of the nobility, and four thouſand men, were all ſlain.

MAHOMET, called Gragné, (which ſignifies *left-handed*) commanded this army. He was governor of Zeyla, and had promoted the league with the Turkiſh baſhas on the coaſt of Arabia; and, having now given the king a check in his firſt enterpriſe, he reſolved to carry on the war with him in a way that ſhould produce ſomething deciſive. He remained then quiet two years at home, ſent all the priſoners he had made in the laſt expedition to Mecca, and to the Turkiſh powers on the coaſt, and required from them in return the number of troops ſtipulated, with a train of portable artillery, which was punctually furniſhed, while a large body of janizaries croſſed over and joined the Mooriſh army. Mahomet led theſe troops ſtraight into Fatigar, which he over-ran, as he did the two other neighbouring provinces Ifat and Dawaro, burning and laying waſte the whole country, and driving, as was his uſual manner, immenſe numbers of the inhabitants, whom the ſword had ſpared, back with him to Adel.

THE next year, Mahomet marched from Adel directly into Dawaro, committing the ſame exceſſes. The king, who ſaw in deſpair that total ruin threatened his whole country, and that there were no hopes but in a battle, met the Mooriſh army at Ifras, very much inferior to them in every ſort of appointment. The battle was fought 1ſt May 1528; the king was defeated, and Iſlam Segued, his firſt miniſter, who commanded the army that day, with many of his principal officers, were ſlain upon the ſpot, and the Mooriſh army took poſſeſſion of Shoa. David retreated with his broken army into Amhara, and encamped at Hegu, thinking to procure reinforcements during the bad weather, but Gragné was too near to give him time for this. He entered Amhara, deſtroying

deſtroying all before him. The ſecond of November he burnt the church of Mecana Selaſſé of the holy ſepulchre, and Atronſa Mariam; and, on the 8th of the ſame month, Ganeta Georgis; on the 2d of December, Debra Agezia-beher; the 6th of the ſame month, St Stephen's church; after which he returned to Adel with his booty.

The following year Gragné returned in April, plundered and burnt Warwar, and wintered there. In the year 1530 Gragné invaded the province of Tigré in the month of October, while the king, who had wintered in Dembea, marched up to Woggora; thence, in December, he went to Tſalamet, and returned to Tigré to keep the feaſt of the Epiphany.

The king, next year, marched through Tzegadé, and Gragné cloſe followed him, as if he had been hunting a wild beaſt rather than making war. The 2d of January he burnt Abba Samuel, then went down into Mazaga the borders of Sennaar to a conference with Muchtar, one of his confederates, when it was reſolved that they ſhould fight the king wherever they could meet him, and attach themſelves to his perſon alone. Gragné by forced marches overtook the king upon the Nile at Delakus, the 6th of February, and offered him battle, knowing the proud ſpirit of David, that he would not refuſe, however great the diſproportion was.

The event was ſuch as might be expected. Fortune again declared againſt the king. Negadé Yaſous, Acab Saat, and many others of the nobility periſhed, fighting to the laſt, in the ſight of their ſovereign. In this bat-

tle the brave monk, Andreas *, much advanced in years, was ſlain, behaving with the greateſt gallantry, unwilling to ſurvive the ruin of his country.

The Moors now found it unneceſſary to keep together an army. They divided into ſmall parties, that they might more effectually and ſpeedily ruin the country. Part of Gragné's army was detached to burn Axum; the other under Simeon continued in Amhara to watch the king's motions; and, while he attempted to relieve Axum, diſperſed his army, on which the town was burnt, and with it many of the richeſt churches in Abyſſinia, Hallelujah, Banquol, Gaſo, Debra Kerbé, and many others. And, on the 7th of April, Saul, ſon of Tesfo Yaſous, fought another detachment of the Mooriſh army, and was cut to pieces.

The 28th year of his reign, 1536, the king croſſed the Tacazzé, and had many diſaſtrous encounters with the people of Siré and Serawé. Tesfo l'Oul, who commanded in this latter province for the king, ſurpriſed a Turkiſh party under Adli, whom he ſlew, and met with the ſame fate himſelf from Abbas, Mooriſh governor of Serawé, when a great many of the principal people of that province were there ſlain. Galila, a large iſland in the lake Tzana, was plundered, and the convent upon it burnt. It was one of the principal places where the Abyſſinians hid their treaſure, and a great booty was found there.

In the following year, Gragné, in a meſſage repreſented to him, that he might ſee he was fighting againſt God, exhorting

* It was he who, as we have ſeen, ſlew the Moor Maſſudi in ſingle combat in the beginning of this reign.

horting him to be wiſe, and make his peace in time, which he ſhould have upon the condition of giving him his daughter in marriage, and he would then withdraw his army, otherwiſe he would never leave Abyſſinia till he had reduced it to a condition of producing nothing but graſs. But the king, nothing daunted, returned him for anſwer, That he was an infidel, and a blaſphemer, uſed as an inſtrument to chaſtiſe him and his people for their many ſins; that it was his duty to bear the correction patiently; but that it would ſoon happen, when this juſt purpoſe was anſwered, that he would be deſtroyed, and all thoſe with him, as ſuch wicked inſtruments had always been; that he the king, and Abyſſinia his kingdom, would be preſerved as a monument of the mercy of God, who never entirely forſook his people, though he might chaſtiſe them.

Indeed, the condition of the country was now ſuch that a total deſtruction ſeemed to be at hand; for a famine and plague, its conſtant companion, raged in Abyſſinia, carrying off thoſe that the ſword had ſpared.

Gideon and Judith, king and queen of the Jews, in the high country of Samen, after having ſuffered much from Gragné, had at laſt rebelled and joined him; and the king, who it ſeems continued to ſhew an inclination to the Catholic church, which he had imbibed during the embaſſy of Don Roderigo, by this had occaſioned many to fall off from him, he and the court obſerving Eaſter according to the Roman kalendar, while the reſt of the clergy and kingdom continued firm to that of Alexandria.

At this time Oſman of Dawaro, Jonadab, Keſla, Youſef, and other rebel Abyſſinians, part of Ammer's army, one of Gragné's generals, ſurpriſed the king's eldeſt ſon, Victor, going to join his father the 7th day of March; ſlew him, and diſperſed his army. Three days after, the king himſelf came to action, with Ammer at Zaat in Waag, but he was there again beaten, and his youngeſt ſon Menas was taken priſoner. The king had ſcarce now an attendant, and, being almoſt alone, he took refuge among the rocks and buſhes in a high mountain called *Tſalem*, in the diſtrict of Tſalamet. But he had not remained above a day there, when he was followed by Joram, (rebel-maſter of that diſtrict) and narrowly eſcaped being taken as he was croſſing the Tacazzé on foot and alone; whence he took refuge on mount Tabor, a very high mountain in Siré, and there he paſſed the winter.

The amazing ſpirit and conſtancy of the king, who alone ſeemed not to forſake the cauſe of his kingdom, who now, without children or army, ſtill ſingly, made war for the liberty of his country, aſtoniſhed all Abyſſinia as well friends as enemies. Every veteran ſoldier, therefore, that could eſcape the ſmall parties of the Moors which ſurrounded the king, joined him at Tabor, and he was again at the head of a very ſmall, but brave body of troops, though it was ſcarcely known in what part of the kingdom he was hid. When Achmet-eddin, lieutenant of Ammer, paſſed through Siré, loaded with the ſpoils of the churches and towns he had plundered, the king, finding him within his reach, deſcended from the mountain, and, by a ſudden march, ſurpriſed and ſlew him with his own hand, leaving the greateſt part of his army dead on the field. After which he diſtributed the booty among his ſmall army.

Ammer, the king's mortal enemy, who had taken upon himſelf the deſtruction of the royal family, deſcended into the province of Siré, and neighbourhood of Tabor, and there indulged himſelf in the moſt wanton cruelties, torturing and murdering the prieſts, burning churches and villages, hoping by this the king would loſe his temper, and leave his ſtrong-hold in the mountain. But hearing at the ſame time, that a large quantity of plate, and other treaſure, belonging to the church Debra Kerbé, had been carried into an iſland in the lake Tzana for ſafety, he left the king, and ſeized his booty in the lake to a very great amount.

However, he there fell ill of a fever; but, on his return, was ſo far advanced in his recovery as to reſume his ſchemes of deſtroying the king; when, the night of the 10th of Feruary 1538, while he was ſleeping in bed in his tent, a common ſoldier, from what quarrel or cauſe is not known, went ſecretly and ſtabbed him ſeveral times in the belly with a two-edged knife, ſo that he died inſtantly, to David's great relief, and much to the ſafety of the whole kingdom.

It was now 12 years ſince Don Roderigo de Lima had ſailed from Maſuah, carrying with him Zaga Zaab ambaſſador from the king of Abyſſinia. This embaſſy arrived ſafe in Liſbon, and was received with great magnificence by king John; but, as the circumſtances of the kingdom when he left Maſuah were really flouriſhing, and as the treatment he met in Portugal was better than he had, probably, ever experienced at home, he ſeems to have been in no haſte to put an end to this embaſſy. On the other ſide, the king of Portugal's affairs in India were arrived at that

degree of proſperity and power, that little uſe remained for ſuch an ally as the king of Abyſſinia.

THE Mooriſh trade and navigation to India had already received a fatal blow, as well from the Portugueſe themſelves, as from the fall of the Mamalukes in Egypt; and Soliman, and his ſervant Sinan Baſha, by their conqueſt, and introducing ſoldiers who had not any idea or talent for trade, but only plunder and rapine, had given a finiſhing ſtroke to what the diſcovery of the Cape of Good Hope began. The filling Arabia with fire-arms and Turks was now of conſequence to none but to David; and of ſuch a conſequence it had been, that, as we have ſeen, in the courſe of 12 years it had left him nothing in Abyſſinia but the bare name of king, and a life ſo precarious that it could not be counted upon from one day's end to the other.

DAVID had detained in Abyſſinia two Portugueſe, one called Maſter John, the other Lazarus d'Andrad a painter, being two of Don Roderigo's train that came from the Indies with him. The Abuna (Mark) was become old and incapable, and, ſince the Turkiſh conqueſt of Egypt, very indifferent to, and unconnected with, what paſſed at Cairo. Before he died, at the king's deſire he had appointed John his ſucceſſor, and accordingly ordained him Abuna, as well as having firſt given him all the inferior orders at once; for John was a layman and ſtudent in phyſic; a very ſimple creature, but a great bigot; and we ſhall from henceforward call him John Bermudes.

JOHN very willingly conſented to his ordination, provided the pope approved of it; and he ſet out for Rome, not

not by the uſual way of India, but through Arabia and Egypt; and, arriving there without accident, was confirmed by Paul III. the then pope, not only as patriarch of Abyſſinia, but of Alexandria likewiſe; to which he added, as Bermudes ſays, the moſt unintelligible and incomprehenſible title of Patriarch of the Sea. Bermudes, to this variety of charges, had this other added to him, of ambaſſador from King David to the court of Portugal; and for this he was certainly very fit, however he might be for his eccleſiaſtical dignities; for he had been now 12 years in Abyſſinia, knew the country well, and had been witneſs of the variety of diſtreſſes which, following cloſe one upon another, had brought this country to its then ſtate of ruin.

While theſe things paſſed in the north of Abyſſinia, a terrible cataſtrophe happened in the ſouth. A Mahometan chief, called Vizir Mudgid, governor of Arar, having an opportunity from his ſituation to hear of the riches which were daily carried from churches, and other places, for ſafety into the mountain of Geſhen, took a reſolution to attempt that natural fortreſs, though in itſelf almoſt impregnable, and ſtrengthened by an army conſtantly encamped at the foot of it.

When Mudgid arrived near the mountain he found it was forſaken by the troops deſtined to guard it; and led by a Mahometan, who was a menial ſervant to the princes above, he aſcended with his troops without oppoſition, putting all the royal family that were priſoners, and indeed every individual of either ſex reſident there, indiſcriminately to the ſword.

The meaſure of David's misfortunes ſeems to have been now full, and he died accordingly this very year 1540.

It will be neceſſary here to remind the reader, that Alvarez, the chaplain and hiſtorian of the firſt Portugueſe embaſſy, was (as he ſaid) on his return appointed by king David to make his ſubmiſſion to the pope. Leaving Zaga Zaab, therefore, in Portugal, he proceeded to Bologna, where the emperor Charles V. was then in perſon, before whom and the pope himſelf he delivered his credentials framed by Peter Covillan, and afterwards, in a long ſpeech, the reaſons of his embaſſy.

The pope received this ſubmiſſion of David with infinite pleaſure, at a time when ſo many kingdoms in the weſt were revolting from his ſupremacy. He conſidered it as a thing of the greateſt moment to be courted before the emperor by ſo powerful a prince in Africa. But as for the emperor himſelf, though he was then preparing for an expedition againſt the Mahometans, and though it was his favourite war, he ſeems to have been perfectly indifferent either to the embaſſy itſelf, or to the perſon that ſent it; a great proof that he believed there was nothing real in it.

Many other people have doubted whether this embaſſy, or that of John Bermudes, actually came from the Abyſſinian court, as the king would ſcarcely have abandoned the form of the Alexandrian church in which he had been brought up by Abuna Mark, then alive. Abuna Mark, moreover, could ſcarcely be believed to have promoted embaſſies which were intended to ſtrike at the root of his own

religion, and the patriarchal power with which he was endowed.

But to this it is eaſily anſwered, That the Abyſſinian hiſtorian of David's reign, through the whole courſe of it, readily admits his conſtant attachment to the ſee of Rome. He gives a ſtriking example of it during the war with Gragné, when the king celebrated Eaſter after the manner of the Roman Catholics, though it was to have this certain effect of dividing his kingdom, and alienating the minds of his ſubjects, of whoſe aſſiſtance he was then in the utmoſt need. And as for the Abuna, we are to conſider that Cairo had been taken, and the government, which Abuna Mark owned for the lawful one, had been overturned by the Turks who then poſſeſſed it, and were actually perſecuting the Alexandrian church.

The Abuna, then, and the king alſo, had the ſame reaſon for not applying to Cairo, the ſeat of the Turks their enemies; and, therefore, they more readily accommodated matters with a people from whom only their aſſiſtance could come; and without whom, it was probable, that both the Chriſtian religion and civil government of Abyſſinia would fall together.

It has been ſaid of this king by the European writers who have touched upon the hiſtory of his reign, that he was a prince who had began it in the moſt promiſing manner, but after the death of the empreſs Helena, he had abandoned himſelf to all ſort of debauchery, and eſpecially that of women; inſomuch, as Mr Ludolf ſays, he ſuffered his concubines to have idols in his palace. This I take

to be a calumny copied from the Portugueſe prieſts, who never forgave him the denial of his writing the letters by Matthew, in which it was ſaid he gave the Portugueſe, or rather king of Portugal, one-third of the kingdom; for he ſucceeded to the crown at 11 years of age, defeated and ſlew Maffudi when he was about ſixteen; and, when Don Roderigo and the Portugueſe embaſſy were with him, he was then ſomething more than twenty, a very devout, prudent prince, according to the account Alvarez, an eye-witneſs, gives of him; and all this time empreſs Helena was alive.

AGAIN, the very year after the Portugueſe embaſſy left Abyſſinia, that is, in the year 1526, the king was defeated by the Moors, and, from that time to his death, was hunted about the country like a wild beaſt, from rock to rock, very often alone, and at all times ſlenderly attended, till he died, in 1540, at the age of 46; ſo there is no period during his life in which this calumny can be juſtly fixed upon him.

As for the idolatry he is accuſed of ſuffering in his palace among his Pagan miſtreſſes, I cannot recollect any place in the adjoining nations from which he could have brought theſe idolatrous rites or miſtreſſes. The Pagan countries around him profeſs a remnant of ill-underſtood Sabaiſm, worſhipping the ſtars, the moon, and the wind; but I do not, as I ſay, recollect any of theſe bordering on Abyſſinia who worſhip idols.

CLAUDIUS,

CLAUDIUS, OR ATZENAF SEGUED.

From 1540 to 1559.

Proſperous Beginning of Claudius's Reign—Chriſtopher de Gama lands in Abyſſinia—Prevented by the rainy Seaſon from joining the King—Battle of Ainal—Battle of Offalo—Chriſtopher de Gama ſlain—Battle of Iſaac's Bet—Moors defeated, and their General ſlain—Abyſſinian Army defeated—Claudius ſlain—Remarkable Behaviour of Nur, Governor of Zeyla, General of the Moors.

CLAUDIUS ſucceeded his father David III. being yet young, and found the empire in circumſtances that would have required an old and experienced prince. But, though young, he poſſeſſed thoſe graceful and affable manners which, at firſt ſight, attached people of all ſorts to him. He had been tutored with great care by the empreſs Helena, was expert in all warlike exerciſes, and brave beyond his years.—So ſay the Abyſſinian annals; and though I have not thought myſelf warranted to depart from the letter of the context, yet it is my duty to the reader to ſhew him how this could not be.

CLAUDIUS was born about the 1522; the empreſs Helena died in 1525. From this it is plain, the firſt three years of

his life was all that he could be under the tutelege of the empreſs Helena; and, at ſo early a period, it is not poſſible he could receive much advantage. The princeſs, to whom he was indebted for his education, was Sabel Wenghel, celebrated in the Abyſſinian hiſtory for wiſdom and courage equal to the empreſs Helena herſelf. She was relict of David. We ſhall hereafter ſee her called Helena likewiſe upon another occaſion; but the reader is deſired to have in mind, that this confuſion of perſons is owing only to that of names to be met with almoſt in every reign in the Abyſſinian hiſtory.

Claudius is ſaid likewiſe in theſe annals to have been a child at the time of his acceſſion; but, having been born in the 1522, and ſucceeding to the throne in 1540, he muſt have been eighteen years of age; and this cannot be called childhood, eſpecially in Abyſſinia, unleſs, as I have before ſaid, this obſervation of age was relative to the arduous taſk he had in hand, by ſucceeding to a kingdom arrived at the very eve of perdition.

The Moors, notwithſtanding the conſtant ſucceſs they had againſt David, ſtill feared the conſequences of his long experience and undaunted reſolution in the moſt adverſe fortune. They were happy, therefore, in the change of ſuch an enemy, however unfortunate, for a young man ſcarcely yet out of the influence of female government, which had always been favourable to them, and their religion.

A general league was formed without delay among all the Mahometan chiefs to ſurround Claudius, and fall upon him

him before he was in a ſituation to defend himſelf, and by one ſtroke to put an end to the war. They accordingly ſet about collecting troops from all quarters, but with a degree of inattention and preſumption that ſufficiently ſhewed they thought themſelves in no danger. But the young king having good intelligence that vizir Aſa, Oſman, Debra Yaſous, and Joram, (who had ſo nearly taken his father priſoner in the mountain Tſalem) had their quarters near him, and neglected a good look-out, fell upon them, without their knowing what his force was, entirely defeated them, diſperſed their army, and ſtruck a panic into the whole confederacy by the manner this victory was followed up; the king himſelf on horſeback continued the purſuit all that day and night, as alſo the next day, and did not return to his camp till the ſecond evening after his victory, having ſlain without mercy every one that had fallen into his hands, either in the flight, or in the field of battle.

Claudius's behaviour, on this firſt occaſion, raiſed the ſoldiers confidence to a degree of enthuſiaſm. Every man that had ſerved under his father repaired to him with the greateſt alacrity. Above all, the Agows of Laſta came down to him in great troops from their rugged and inacceſſible mountains, the chief of that warlike nation being related to him by his mother.

The king in perſon at the head of his army became now an object of ſuch conſideration as to make the Mahometan chiefs no longer retire as uſual to winter in Adel, but canton themſelves in the ſeveral diſtricts they had conquered in Abyſſinia, and lay aſide the thoughts of farther waſting the country,

country, to defend themſelves againſt ſo active and ſpirited an aſſailant. They agreed then to join their whole forces together, and march to force the king to a battle. Oſman of Ganzé, vizir Mudgid who had ſettled in Amhara, Saber-eddin *, and all the leſſer rebel officers of Siré and Serawé, effected a junction about the ſame time without oppoſition. Jonathan alone, a rebel of great experience, had not yet appeared with his troops. The king, on the other hand, did not ſeem over anxious to come to an engagement, though his army was every day ready for battle; and his ground was always taken with advantage, ſo that it was almoſt deſperate to pretend to force him.

JONATHAN at laſt was on his way to join the confederates; but the king had as early intelligence of his motions as his friends: and, while he was yet two days march diſtant from the camp, the king, leaving his tents ſtanding and his fires lighted, by a forced march in the night came upon him, (while he thought him blocked up by his rebel aſſociates at a diſtance) and, finding Jonathan without preparation or defence, cut his whole army to pieces, ſlew him, and then returned to his own tents as rapidly as he went, having ordered ſmall detachments to continue in the way between him and his camp, patroling leſt ſome ambuſh ſhould be laid for him by the enemy, who, if they had been informed of his march, though they were too late to prevent the ſucceſs of it, might ſtill have attempted to revenge it.

BUT

* Conſtant in the faith.

But intelligence was now given to the Moors with much leſs punctuality and alacrity than formerly. So generally did the king poſſeſs the affections of the country-people, that no information came to the confederate army till the next day after his return, when, early in the morning, he diſpatched one of the Mooriſh priſoners that he had taken three days before, and ſpared for the purpoſe, carrying with him the head of Jonathan, and a full account of the havock to which he had been a witneſs.

This meſſenger bore alſo the king's defiance to the Moors, whom he challenged, under the odious epithets they deſerved, to meet him; and then actually to ſhew he was in earneſt, marched towards them with his army, which he formed in order of battle. But tho' they ſtood under arms for a conſiderable time, whilſt ſeveral invitations to ſingle combat were ſent from the Chriſtian horſemen, as their cuſtom is, before they engage, or when their camps are near each other, yet the Moors were ſo aſtoniſhed at what had happened, and what they ſaw now before them, that not one officer would adviſe the riſking a battle, nor any one ſoldier accept of the challenge offered. The king then returned to his camp, diſtributed the whole booty among his ſoldiers, and refreſhed them, preſerving a proper ſtation to cover the wounded, whom he ſent off to places of ſecurity.

The king was in the country of Samen in the neighbourhood of Laſta. He then decamped and paſſed the river Tacazzé, that he might be nearer thoſe diſtricts of which the Turks had poſſeſſed themſelves. In this march all ſorts of people joined the victorious army. Thoſe that had revolted, and many that had apoſtatized, came without fear and ſur-

rendered themſelves, truſting to the clemency of the prince. Many of the Moors, natives of Abyſſinia, did the ſame, after having experienced the difference between the mild Chriſtian government, and that of their new maſters, the Moors and Turks of Adel.

The king encamped at Sard, there to paſs his Eaſter; and, as is uſual in the great feſtivals, many of the nobility obtained leave to attend the religious offices of the ſeaſon at home with their families. Ammer, governor of Ganzé, who knew the cuſtom of the country, thought this was the time to ſurpriſe the king thinly attended; and it might have ſucceeded, if intelligence of the enemy's deſigns had not been received almoſt as ſoon as they were formed. Claudius, therefore, drawing together ſome of the beſt of his forces, placed himſelf in ambuſh in Ammers's way, who, not ſuſpecting, fell into it with his army, which was totally deſtroyed on the 24th of April 1541. After which the king left his own quarter at Sard and came to Shume.

While things were taking this favourable turn in Abyſſinia, the ambaſſador, John Bermudes, had paſſed from Rome to Liſbon, where he was acknowledged by the king as patriarch of Alexandria, Abyſſinia, and, as he will have it, of the Sea. The firſt thing he did was to give the Portugueſe a ſample of Abyſſinian diſcipline, by putting Zaga Zaab in irons for having waſted ſo much time without effecting any of the purpoſes of his embaſſy; but, by the interpoſition of the king, he was ſet at liberty in a few days. Bermudes then fell roundly to the ſubject of his embaſſy, and drew ſuch a picture of the diſtreſſes of Abyſſinia, and inſiſted in his own blunt way ſo violently with the king of

Portugal, and the nobility in general, that he procured an order from the king for Don Garcia de Noronha, who was then going out viceroy of the Indies, to ſend 400 Portugueſe muſqueteers from India to the relief of Abyſſinia, and to land them at Maſuah.

JOHN BERMUDES, to ſecure the aſſiſtance promiſed, reſolved to embark in the ſame fleet with Don Garcia; but he fell ſick, from poiſon given him, as he apprehends, by Zaga Zaab, and this delayed his embarkation a year. The next year, being recovered of his illneſs, he arrived ſafely at India. In the interim Don Garcia died, and Don Stephen de Gama, who ſucceeded him, did not embrace the ſcheme of the intended ſuccour with ſuch eagerneſs as Bermudes could have wiſhed.

AFTER ſome delay, however, it was reſolved that Don Stephen ſhould himſelf undertake an expedition from India, to burn the Turkiſh gallies that were at Suez. In this, however, Don Stephen was diſappointed. Upon intelligence of the intended viſit, the Turkiſh gallies had been all drawn aſhore. He came after this to the port of Maſuah, where the fleet intended to water; and, for that purpoſe, their boats were ſent to Arkeeko, a ſmall town and fortreſs upon the main-land, where good water may be found. But the Moors and Turks from Zeyla and Adel were now maſters there, who took the 1000 webs of cotton-cloth the captain had ſent to exchange for water and proviſions, and ſent him word back, that his maſter, the king of Adel, was now king of all Ethiopia, and would not ſuffer any further trade to be carried on, but through his ſubjects; if, therefore, the captain of the fleet would make peace with him, he ſhould reſtore the cotton-

webs which had been taken, ſupply him plentifully with proviſions, and make amends for the ſixty Portugueſe ſlain on the coaſt near Zeyla: For, upon the fleet's entering the Red Sea, this number of Portugueſe had run away with a boat; and, landing in the kingdom of Adel, where they could procure no water, they were decoyed to give up their arms, and were then all maſſacred.

The captain, Don Stephen, ſaw the trap laid for him by the Moors, and, reſolving to pay them in their own coin, he returned this anſwer to their meſſage, "That he was very willing to trade with the Mooriſh officer, but did not demand reſtitution of the clothes, as they were taken in fair war. As for the ſixty Portugueſe, they had met the death they deſerved, as being traitors and deſerters: That he now ſent a thouſand more clothes, deſiring water and proviſions, eſpecially live cattle; and that, as it was now the time of their feſtival, he would treat with them for peace, and bring his goods aſhore as ſoon as the holidays were over."

This being agreed to on both ſides, with equal bad faith and intention towards each other, and Don Stephen having obtained his refreſhments, he ſtrictly forbade any further communication with the ſhore. He then ſelected a body of ſix hundred men, the command of whom he gave to Martin Correa, who, in light boats, without ſhewing any fire, landed undiſcovered below Arkeeko, and took poſſeſſion of the entrances to the town, putting all that they met to the ſword. Nur, governor of the province for the king of Adel, fled as ſoon as he had heard the Portugueſe were in the town: He was already in the fields, when Martin Correa ſhot him with a muſquet, and cut off his head,

which

which was ſent before them to the queen, Sabel Wenghel, then in a ſtrong-hold of the province of Tigré, and with her Degdeaſmati (which, in common diſcourſe, is called *Kaſmati)* Robel. This was the perſon of that name who had met Don Roderigo in his journey to find the king, and who was now governor of the province. The queen received the Mooriſh general's head with great demonſtrations of joy, conſidering it as an early pledge of future victories.

In the mean time, Don Stephen de Gama, captain of the fleet, began to inrol the men deſtined to march to join Claudius. Four hundred and fifty muſqueteers was the number granted by the king to Bermudes; but an ardent deſire of glory had ſeized all the Portugueſe, and every one ſtrove to be in the nomination for that enterpriſe. All that Don Stephen could do was to chooſe men of the firſt rank for the officers; and theſe, of neceſſity, having many ſervants whom they carried with them, greatly, by this means, encreaſed the number beyond the 450. Don Chriſtopher de Gama, Don Stephen's youngeſt brother, a nobleman of great hopes, was choſen to command this ſmall army of heroes.

A very great murmuring, nevertheleſs, prevailed among thoſe that were refuſed, which was ſcarcely kept in due bounds by the preſence and authority of the governor Don Stephen himſelf. And from this honourable emulation, and the diſcontent theſe brave ſoldiers who were left behind ſhewed, the bay where the galley rode in the harbour of Maſuah, on board which this council was held, is called to this day *Bahia dos Agravados*, the Bay of Wronged, or Injured People, ſometimes miſinterpreted the Bay *of the Sick*.

THE army under Don Chriſtopher marched to Arkeeko, where the next day came the governor Don Stephen, and the principal officers of the fleet, and took leave of their countrymen; and, after receiving the bleſſing of Don John Bermudes, *Patriarch of the Sea*, the governor and reſt of the Portugueſe embarked, and returned to India.

DON CHRISTOPHER, with the greateſt intrepidity, began his march towards Dobarwa, the eaſieſt entrance into Abyſſinia, though ſtill over rugged and almoſt inacceſſible mountains. The Baharnagaſh had orders to attend him, and furniſh this little army with cattle both for their proviſion and carriages; and this he actually performed. But the carriages of the ſmall train of artillery giving way in this bad road, and there being nobody at hand to aſſiſt them with freſh ones in caſe the old failed, Gama made certain carriages of wood after the pattern of thoſe they had brought from Portugal; and, as iron was a very ſcarce commodity in Abyſſinia, he made them ſplit in pieces ſome barrels of old and uſeleſs firelocks for the wheels with which they were to draw their artillery.

THE queen, without delay, came forward to join Don Chriſtopher; who, hearing ſhe was at hand, went to meet her a league from the city with drums beating and colours flying, and ſaluted her with a general diſcharge of fire-arms, which terrified her much. Her two ſiſters accompanied her, and a number of attendants of both ſexes. Don Chriſtopher, at the head of his ſoldiers, paid his compliments with equal gallantry and reſpect. The queen was covered from head to foot, but lifted up her veil, ſo that her face could be ſeen by him; and he, on the other hand, appointed a hundred

muſqueteers

muſqueteers for her guard; and thus they returned to Dobarwa mutually ſatisfied with this their firſt interview.

Don Christopher marched from Dobarwa eight days through a very rugged country, endeavouring, if poſſible, to bring about a junction with the king. And it was in this place, while he was encamped, that he received a meſſage from the Mooriſh general, full of opprobrious expreſſions, which was anſwered in much the ſame manner. Don Chriſtopher continued his march as much as he could on account of the rains; and Gragnè, whoſe greateſt deſire was to prevent the junction, followed him into Tigrè. Neither army deſired to avoid the other, and they were both marching to the ſame point; ſo that on the 25th of March 1542, they came in ſight of each other at Ainal, a ſmall village in the country of the Baharnagaſh.

The Mooriſh army conſiſted of 1000 horſemen, 5000 foot, 50 Turkiſh muſqueteers, and a few pieces of artillery. Don Chriſtopher, beſides his 450 muſqueteers, had about 12,000 Abyſſinians, moſtly foot, with a few bad horſe commanded by the Baharnagaſh, and Robel governor of Tigrè. Don Chriſtopher, whoſe principal view was a junction with the king, though he did not decline fighting, yet, like a good officer, he choſe to do it as much as poſſible upon his own terms; and, therefore, as the enemy exceeded greatly in the number of horſe, he poſted himſelf ſo as to make the beſt of his fire-arms and artillery. And well it was that he did ſo, for the Abyſſinians ſhewed the utmoſt terror when the firing began on both ſides.

Gragne,

Gragne, mounted on a bay horſe, advancing too near Don Chriſtopher's line that he might ſee if in any part it was acceſſible to his cavalry, and being known by his dreſs to be an officer of diſtinction, he was ſhot at by Peter de Sa, a Portugueſe markſman, who killed his horſe, and wounded the rider in the leg. This occaſioned a great confuſion, and would probably have ended in a defeat of the Moors, had not the Portugueſe general alſo been wounded immediately after by a ſhot. Don Chriſtopher, to ſhew his confidence of victory, ordered his men forthwith to pitch their tents, upon which the Moors retired with Gragnè (whom they had mounted on another horſe) without being purſued, the Abyſſinians having contented themſelves with being ſpectators of the battle.

Don Christopher, with his army and the empreſs, now entered into winter-quarters at Aſſalo; nor did Gragnè depart to any diſtance from him, but took up his quarters at Zabul, in hopes always to fight the Portugueſe before it was poſſible for them to effect a junction with the king. The winter paſſed in a mutual intercourſe of correſpondence and confidence between the king and Don Chriſtopher, and in determining upon the beſt ſcheme to purſue the war with ſucceſs. Don Chriſtopher and the queen were both of opinion, that, conſidering the ſmall number of Portugueſe firſt landed, and their diminution by fighting, and a ſtrange climate, it was riſking every thing to defer a junction till the winter was over.

The Mooriſh general was perfectly of the ſame opinion; therefore, as ſoon as the king began his march from Dembea, Gragné advanced to Don Chriſtopher's camp, and placed himſelf

ſelf between the Portugueſe army and that of the king, drawing up his troops before the camp, and defying the Portugueſe to march out, and fight, in the moſt opprobrious language. Don Chriſtopher, in a long catalogue of virtues which he poſſeſſed to a very eminent degree, had not the ſmalleſt claim to that of patience, ſo very neceſſary to thoſe that command armies. He was brave to a fault; raſh and vehement; jealous of what he thought military honour; and obſtinate in his reſolutions, which he formed in conſequence. The defiance of this barbarian, at which an old general would have laughed, made him utterly forget the reaſons he himſelf frequently alledged, and the arguments uſed by the queen, which the king's approach daily ſtrengthened, that it was riſking every thing to come to a battle till the two armies had joined. He had, however, from no other motive but Gragnè's inſolence, formed his reſolution to fight, without waiting a junction; and accordingly the 30th of Auguſt, early in the morning, having choſen his ground to the beſt advantage, he offered battle to the Mooriſh army.

Gragne, by preſents ſent to the baſha of Zibid, had doubled his number of horſe, which now conſiſted of 2000. He had got likewiſe 100 Turkiſh muſqueteers, an infinite number of foot, and a train of artillery more numerous and complete than ever had been ſeen before in Abyſſinia. The queen, frightened at the preparation for the battle, fled, taking with her the Portugueſe patriarch, who ſeemed to have as little inclination as ſhe had to ſee the iſſue of the day. But Don Chriſtopher, who knew well the bad effects this example would have, both on Abyſſinians and Portugueſe, ſent twenty horſe, and brought them both back; telling the patriarch it was a breach of duty he would not ſuf-

fer, for him to withdraw until he had confeſſed him, and given the army abſolution before the action with the Infidels.

The battle was fought on the 30th of Auguſt with great fury and obſtinacy on both ſides. The Portugueſe had ſtrewed, early in the morning, all the front of their line with gun-powder, to which, on the approach of the Turks, they ſet fire by trains, which burnt and diſabled a great many of them; and things bore a proſperous appearance, till the Mooriſh general ordered ſome artillery to be pointed againſt the Abyſſinians, who, upon hearing the firſt exploſion, and ſeeing the effect of ſome balls that had lighted among them, fled, and left the Portugueſe to the number only of 400, who were immediately ſurrounded by the Mooriſh army. Nor did Gragnè purſue the fugitives, his affair being with the Portugueſe, the ſmallneſs of whoſe number promiſed they would fall an eaſy and certain ſacrifice. He therefore, attacked their camp upon every ſide with very little ſucceſs, having loſt moſt of his beſt officers, till, unfortunately, Don Chriſtopher, fighting and expoſing himſelf everywhere, was ſingled out by a Turkiſh ſoldier, and ſhot through the arm. Upon this all his men turned their thoughts from their own preſervation to that of their general, who obſtinately refuſed to fly, till he was by force put upon a litter, and ſent off, together with the patriarch and queen.

Night now coming on, Don Chriſtopher had got into a wood in which there was a cave. There he ordered himſelf to be ſet down to have his wounds dreſſed; which, being done, he was urged by the queen and patriarch to continue his

his flight. But he had formed his reſolution, and, without deigning to give his reaſons, he obſtinately refuſed to retreat a ſtep farther. In vain the queen, and thoſe that knew the country, told him he was juſt in the tract of the Mooriſh horſemen, who would not fail ſoon to ſurround him. He repeated his reſolution of ſtaying there with ſuch a degree of firmneſs, that the queen and patriarch, who had no great deſire for martyrdom, left him to his fate, which preſently overtook him.

In one of Don Chriſtopher's expeditions to the mountains, he had taken a very beautiful woman, wife to a Turkiſh officer, whom he had ſlain. This lady had made a ſhew of converſion to Chriſtianity; lived with him afterwards, and was treated by him with the utmoſt tenderneſs. It was ſaid, that, after he was wounded and began to fly, this woman had given him his route, and promiſed to overtake him with friends that would carry him to a place of ſafety. Accordingly, ſome ſervants left by the queen, hidden among the rocks, to watch what might befal him, and aſſiſt him if poſſible, ſaw a woman, in the dawn of the morning, come to the cave, and return into the wood immediately, whence there ruſhed out a body of Mooriſh horſe, who went ſtraight to the cave and found Don Chriſtopher lying upon the ground ſorely wounded. Upon the firſt queſtion that was aſked him, he declared his name, which ſo overjoyed the Moors, that they gave over further purſuit, and returned with the priſoner they had taken. Don Chriſtopher was brought into the preſence of the Mooriſh general, Gragné, who loaded him with reproaches; to which he replied with ſuch a ſhare of invectives, that the Moor, in the violence of his paſſion, drew his ſword and cut

off his head with his own hand. His head was ſent to Conſtantinople, and parts of his body to *Z*ibid and other quarters of Arabia.

THE Portugueſe camp was now taken, and all the wounded found in it were put to death. The women, from their fear, having retired all into Don Chriſtopher's tent, the Turks began to indulge themſelves in their uſual exceſſes towards their captives, when a noble Abyſſinian woman, who had been married to a Portugueſe, ſeeing the ſhocking treatment that was awaiting them, ſet fire to ſeveral barrels of gunpowder that were in the tent, and at once deſtroyed herſelf, her companions, and thoſe that were about to abuſe them.

THE queen and the patriarch, after travelling through moſt difficult ways, and being hoſpitably entertained wherever they paſſed, at laſt took up their reſidence in the Jews mountain, a place inacceſſible in point of ſtrength, having but one entrance, and that very difficult, being alſo defended by a multitude of inhabitants who dwell on a large plain on the top of that mountain, where there is plenty of ſpace to plow and ſow, and a large ſtream of water that runs through the whole of it. Here they ſtaid two months, as well to repoſe themſelves as to give the king time to relieve them. After hearing that he was in motion, they left the mountain of the Jews, and met him on his march towards them.

CLAUDIUS ſhewed great ſigns of ſorrow for the death of Don Chriſtopher, and mourned three days. He then ſent 3000 ounces of gold to be divided among the Portugueſe, who, in the place of Don Chriſtopher, had elected Alphonſo Caldeyra

Caldeyra for their captain. Theſe all flocked about the king, demanding that he would lead them to battle, that they might revenge the death of Don Chriſtopher. Soon after which, Alphonſo Caldeyra, exerciſing a horſe in the field, was thrown off and died of the fall. In his place was elected Arius Dias, a Portugueſe, born at Coimbra, whoſe mother was a black; he was very much favoured by the king, who now began to cultivate particular parties among the Portugueſe, in order to divide them, and looſen their attachment for their patriarch, religion, and country.

The king marched from Samen to Shawada, where the Mooriſh army came in full force to meet him. They were not, however, thoſe formidable troops that had defeated and taken Don Chriſtopher: For the Turkiſh ſoldiers, who were the ſtrength of the army, expecting to have ſhared a great ſum each for Don Chriſtopher's ranſom, thought themſelves exceedingly injured by the manner in which he was put to death; and they had accordingly all to a man returned into Arabia, leaving Gragné to fight his own batttles for his own profit. Nor was Claudius ignorant of this; and having collected all his army he gave the Moors battle on the 15th of November in a plain called Woggora, on the top of Lamalmon, in which the Moors, notwithſtanding their recent victory, were not long in yielding to the ſuperiority of the king's troops.

The loſs of the day was not inconſiderable. Mahomet, Oſman, and Talil, three Mooriſh leaders, famous for their ſucceſſes

ſucceſſes againſt David the king's father, were this day ſlain in the field.

Claudius now deſcended into the low country of Derſeguè, a very plentiful province, to which the Moors always retreated to ſtrengthen themſelves after any misfortune. This the king utterly deſtroyed; while Gragné did the ſame with thoſe countries in Dembea that had been recovered by the king. Claudius then returned to Shawada, and Gragnè to Derſeguè. After that the king marched to Wainadega, and Gragnè, leaving Derſeguè, advanced ſo near the king's army, that the outpoſts were nearly in ſight of each other. In ſuch a poſition of two ſuch armies a battle became inevitable.

Accordingly, on the 10th of Feb. 1543, in the morning, the king, whoſe quarters were at Iſaac's Bet, having well refreſhed his army, marched out of his camp, and offered the enemy battle. The Portugueſe, ever mindful of Don Chriſtopher, fought with a bravery like to deſperation, and the preſence of the king keeping the Abyſſinians in their duty, the van of Gragné's army was puſhed back upon the center, and much confuſion was like to follow, till Gragnè advanced alone before them, waving and beckoning with his hands to his men that they ſhould follow; and he was already come ſo near the Portugueſe line as to be eaſily known and diſtinguiſhed by them.

Peter Lyon, a man of low ſtature, but very active and valiant, who had been valet-de-chambre to Don Chriſtopher, having crept unſeen along the courſe of a river a conſiderable ſpace nearer, to make his aim more certain, ſhot Gragnè with

with his muſquet, ſo that the ball went through his body in the moment that both armies joined. Gragnè, finding that his wound was mortal, rode aſide from the preſſure of the troops towards a ſmall thicket, and was cloſely followed by Peter Lyon, who ſaw him fall dead from his horſe; and, deſirous ſtill to do further ſervice in the battle, he would not incumber himſelf with his head, but, cutting off one of the ears, he put it in his pocket, and returned to the action. The Mooriſh army no ſooner miſſed the preſence of their general, than concluding all loſt, they fell into confuſion, and were purſued by the Portugueſe and Abyſſinians with a great ſlaughter, till the evening.

The next morning, in ſurveying the dead, the body of Gragnè was found by an Abyſſinian officer, who cut his head off, and brought it to the king, who received him with great honour and promiſe of reward. Peter Lyon ſtood a ſilent ſpectator of the impudence of his competitor; but Arius Dias, who knew the fact, deſired the king's attention; ſaying, at the ſame time, "That he believed his majeſty knew Gragnè well enough to ſuppoſe that he would not ſuffer any man to cut off his ear, without having it in his power to ſever his head alſo; and conſequently, that the ear muſt be in poſſeſſion of a better man than he that had brought his head to the camp." Upon this, Peter Lyon pulled the ear out of his pocket, and laid it at the king's feet, amidſt the acclamations of all preſent, for his bravery in revenging his old maſter's death, and his modeſty in being content with having done ſo, without pretending to any other reward.

2

In

In this battle, a ſon of Gragnè was taken priſoner, with many other conſiderable officers; and Del Wumbarea, wife of Gragnè, with Nur ſon of Mudgid, and a few troops, were obliged to throw themſelves, for ſafety, among the wilds and woods of Atbara, thereby eſcaping with great difficulty.

The king had now ample revenge of all the Mooriſh leaders who had reduced his father to ſuch extremities, excepting Joram, who had driven the king from his hiding-place on mount Tſalem, and forced him to croſs the Tacazzé on foot, with equal danger of being drowned or taken. This leader had, much againſt his will, been detained from the laſt battle, but, hoping to be ſtill in time, was advancing by forced marches. The king, informed of his route, detached a party of his army to meet him before the news of the battle could reach him. They having placed themſelves in ambuſh, he fell into it with his army, and was cut to pieces: this completed Claudius's account with his father's enemies.

During the late war with Gragné, the provinces of Tigrè and Sirè had been the principal ſeat of the war. They were immediately in the way between Dembea, Maſuah, and the other Mooriſh poſts upon the Red Sea; the enemy had croſſed them in all directions, and a proportionable devaſtation had been the conſequence. Gragnè had burnt Axum, and deſtroyed all the churches and convents in Tigrè. The king, now delivered from this enemy, had applied ſeriouſly to repair the ravages which had been made in the country. For this purpoſe he marched with a ſmall army towards Axum, intending afterwards an expedition againſt the Galla.

It was in the 13th year of the reign of Claudius, while he was at Sirè, that there happened a very remarkable eclipſe of the ſun, which threw both court and army into great conſternation. The prophets and diviners, ignorant monks of the deſert, did not let ſlip ſo favourable an opportunity of increaſing their conſequence by augmenting this panic, and declaring this eclipſe to portend nothing leſs than the renewal of the Mooriſh war. The year, however, paſſed in tranquillity and peace. Two old women, relations of the king, are ſaid to have died; and it was in this great calamity that theſe diviners were to look for the completion of their prophecies. It is from this, however, that I have taken an opportunity to compare and rectify the dates of the principal tranſactions in the Abyſſinian hiſtory. Sirè, where the king then reſided, was a point very favourable for this application; for, in my journey from Maſuah to Gondar, I had ſettled the latitude and longitude of that town by many obſervations.

On the 22d of January 1770, at night, by a medium of different paſſages of ſtars over the meridian, and by an obſervation of the ſun the noon of the following day, I found the latitude to be 14° 4′ 35″ north, and the evening of the 23d, I obſerved an emerſion of the firſt ſatellite of Jupiter, and by this I concluded the longitude of Sirè to be 38° 0′ 15″ eaſt of the meridian of Greenwich.

The 13th year of the reign of Claudius falls to be in the 1553, and I find that there was a remarkable eclipſe of the ſun that did happen that ſame year on the 24th of January N. S. which anſwers to the 18th of the Ethiopic month Teir. The circumſtances of this eclipſe were as follow:

	H.	M.	S.	
Beginning, -	7	21	0	A. M.
Middle, -	8	40	0	
End - -	10	1	0	

The quantity of the ſun's diſk obſcured was 10 digits; ſo that this was ſo near to a total eclipſe, it muſt have made an impreſſion on the ſpectators minds that ſufficiently accounts for the alarm and apprehenſions it occaſioned.

In the month of January, nothing can be more beautiful than the ſky in Siré; not a cloud appears; the ſky is all of a pale azure, the colour lighter than an European ſky, and of inexpreſſible beauty. The manner of applying this eclipſe I ſhall mention hereafter.

Eclipses of the moon do not ſeem to be attended to in Abyſſinia. The people are very little out in the night, inſomuch that I do not find one of theſe recorded throughout their hiſtory. The circumſtances of the ſeaſon make even thoſe of the ſun ſeldomer viſible than in other climates, for in the rainy ſeaſon, from April to September, the heavens are conſtantly overcaſt with clouds, ſo that it is mere accident if they can catch the moment it happens. But in the month of Teir, that is December and January, the ſky is perfectly ſerene and clear, and at this time our eclipſe above mentioned happened.

The king now took into his conſideration the ſtate of the church. He had ſent for an Abuna from Cairo to ſucceed Abuna Marcus, and he was now in his way to Abyſſinia, while Bermudes, not able to bear this ſlight, on the other

hand, publicly declared to the king, that, having been ambaſſador from his father, and made his ſubmiſſion to the Roman pontiff, for himſelf and for his kingdom, he now expected that Claudius would make good his father's engagements, embrace the Roman Catholic religion himſelf, and, without delay, proclaim it as the eſtabliſhed religion in Abyſſinia. This the king poſitively refuſed to do, and a converſation enſued, which is repeated by Bermudes himſelf, and ſufficiently ſhews the moderation of the young king, and the fiery, brutal zeal of that ignorant, bigotted, ill-mannered prieſt. Hitherto the Abyſſinians heard the Portugueſe maſs with reverence and attention; and the Portugueſe frequented the Abyſſinian churches with complacency. They intermarried with each other, and the children ſeem to have been chriſtened indifferently by the prieſts of either church. And this might have long continued, had it not been for the impatience of Bermudes.

The king, ſeeing the danger of connecting himſelf with ſuch a man, kept up every appearance of attachment to the Alexandrian church. Yet, ſays the Abyſſinian hiſtorian who writes his life, it was well known that Claudius, in his heart, was a private, but perfect convert, to the Romiſh faith, and kept only from embracing it by his hatred to Bermudes, the conſtant perſuaſion of the empreſs Sabel Wenghel, and the recollection of the misfortunes of his father. Upon being required publicly to ſubmit himſelf to the See of Rome, he declared that he had made no ſuch promiſe; that he conſidered Bermudes as no patriarch, or, at beſt, only patriarch of the Franks; and that the Abuna of Abyſſinia was the chief prieſt acknowledged by him. Bermudes told him, that he was accurſed and excommunicated. Claudius anſwered, that

he, Bermudes, was a neſtorian heretic, and worſhipped four gods. Bermudes anſwered plainly, that he lied; that he would take every Portugueſe from him, and return to India whence he came. The king's anſwer was, that he wiſhed he would return to India; but as for the Portugueſe, neither they, nor any other perſon, ſhould leave his kingdom without his permiſſion. Accordingly, having perfectly gained Arius Dias, he gave him the name of Marcus, with the command of the Portugueſe, and ſent him a ſtandard with his own arms, to uſe inſtead of the king of Portugal's. But the Abyſſinian page being met, on his return, with the Portugueſe ſtandard in his hand, by James Brito, he wreſted it from him, felling him to the ground with a blow of his ſword on the head.

From expoſtulations with the king, the matter of religion turned into diſputes among the prieſts, at which the king always aſſiſted in perſon. If we ſuppoſe they were no better ſuſtained on the part of the Abyſſinians than they were by the patriarch Bermudes, who we know was no great divine, we cannot expect much that was edifying from the arguments that either of them uſed. The Portugueſe prieſts ſay *, that the king, ſtruck with the ignorance of his own clergy, frequently took the diſcuſſion upon himſelf, which he managed with ſuch force of reaſoning as often to put the patriarch to a ſtand. From verbal diſputes, which terminated in nothing, Bermudes was reſolved to appeal to arguments in writing; and, with the help of thoſe that were with him of the ſame faith, a fair ſtate of the differences in queſtion was made in a ſmall book, and preſented to the king, who read it with ſo much pleaſure that he kept it conſtantly by him. This gave very great offence to the Abyſſinian

* Tellez, lib. 2. cap. 27.

Abyſſinian clergy; and the Abuna being now arrived, the king deſired of him liberty to read that book, which he refuſing, put the young king into ſo violent a paſſion that he called the Abuna Mahometan and Infidel to his face.

THINGS growing worſe and worſe between the Portugueſe and Abyſſinians, by the incendiary ſpirit of the bruiſh Bermudes, from reproaches they came to blows; and this proceeded ſo far, that the Portugueſe one night aſſaulted the king's tent, where they ſlew ſome, and grievouſly wounded others. Upon this, the king, deſirous to eſtrange him a little from the Portugueſe, ſent Bermudes to the country of the Gafats, where he gave him large appointments, in hopes that the natural turbulence of his temper would involve him in ſome difficulties. And there he ſtaid ſeven months, oppreſſing the poor ignorant people, and frightening them with the noiſe of his fire-arms. During this period, the king went on an expedition againſt the Galla; Bermudes then returned to court, where he found that Arius Dias was dead, and a great many of the Portugueſe very well attached to the king. But he began his old work of diſſention, inſomuch that the king determined to baniſh him to a mountain for life.

GASPAR DE SUZA now commanded the Portugueſe inſtead of Arius Dias, a man equally beloved by his own nation and the king. By his perſuaſions, and that of Kaſmati Robel, the baniſhment to the mountain was laid aſide; but Bermudes was privately perſuaded to embark for India while it was yet time; and accordingly he repaired to Dobarwa, where he remained two years, as it ſhould ſeem, perfectly quiet, neglected, and forlorn; ſaying daily maſs to ten Portugueſe

tugueſe who had ſettled in that town after the defeat of Don Chriſtopher. He then went to Maſuah, and the monſoon being favourable, he embarked on board a Portugueſe veſſel, carrying with him the ten Portugueſe that were ſettled at Dobarwa, who all arrived ſafely at Goa.

St Ignatius, founder of the Order of Jeſuits, was then at Rome in the dawn of his holineſs. The converſion of Abyſſinia ſeemed of ſuch conſequence to him, that he reſolved himſelf to go and be the apoſtle of the kingdom. But the pope, who had conceived other hopes of him and his Order more important and nearer at hand, abſolutely refuſed this offer. One of his ſociety, Nugnez Baretto, was, however, fixed upon for patriarch, without any notice being taken of Don John Bermudes. By him Ignatius ſent a letter addreſſed to Claudius, which is to be found in the collections *. It does not, I think, give us any idea of the ingenuity or invention of that great ſaint. It ſeems moſtly to beg the queſtion, and to contain little elſe than texts of ſcripture for his future miſſionaries to preach and write on, relative to the difference of tenets of the two churches.

With this letter, and a number of prieſts, Baretto came to Goa. But news being arrived there of king Claudius's ſteady averſion to the Catholic church, it was then thought better, rather than riſk the patriarchal dignity, to ſend Andrew Oviedo biſhop of Hierapolis, and Melchior Carneyro biſhop of Nice, with ſeveral other prieſts, as ambaſſadors from the governor of India to Claudius, with proper credentials. They arrived ſafely at Maſuah in 1558, five days before the Turkiſh baſha came with his fleet and army, and took poſſeſſion of

* Dated at Rome 16th Feb. 1555. See Tellez, lib. 2. cap. 22.

of Maſuah and Arkeeko, though theſe places had been occupied by the Turks two years before.

When the arrival of theſe Portugueſe was intimated to Claudius, he was exceedingly glad, as he conſidered them as an acceſſion of ſtrength. But when, on opening the letter, he ſaw they were prieſts, he was very much troubled, and ſaid, that he wondered the king of Portugal ſhould meddle ſo much with his affairs; that he and his predeceſſors knew no obedience due but to the chair of St Mark, or acknowledged any other patriarch but that of Alexandria; nevertheleſs, continued he with his uſual goodneſs and moderation, ſince they are come ſo far out of an honeſt concern for me, I ſhall not fail to ſend proper perſons to receive and conduct them. This he did, and the two biſhops and their companions were immediately brought to court. It was at this time that the diſpute about the two natures began, in which the king took ſo conſiderable a part. He was ſtrenuous, eloquent, and vehement in the diſcuſſion; when that was ended, he ſtill preſerved his uſual moderation and kindneſs for the Portugueſe prieſts.

Nugnez died in India, and Oviedo ſucceeded him as patriarch to Abyſſinia, it having been ſo appointed by the pope from the beginning of their miſſion.

Claudius had no children; a treaty was therefore ſet on foot, at the inſtance of the empreſs Sabel Wenghel, for ranſoming the prince Menas who had been taken priſoner in his father David's time, and ever ſince kept in confinement among the Moors, upon a high mountain in Adel.

The

The ſame had happened to a ſon of Gragné likewiſe, made priſoner at the battle of Wainadega, when his father was ſlain by Claudius. The Moors ſettled in Abyſſinia, as well as all the Abyſſinian rebels who had forſaken their allegiance or religion during the war, were to a man violently againſt ſetting Menas at liberty, for he was the only brother Claudius had, and a diſputed ſucceſſion was otherwiſe probable, which was what the Moors longed for. Beſides this, Menas was exceedingly brave, of a ſevere and cruel temper, a mortal enemy to the Mahometans, and at this time in the flower of his age, and perfectly fit to govern. It was not, then, by any means, an eligible meaſure for thoſe who were naturally the objects of his hatred, to provide ſuch an aſſiſtant and ſucceſſor to Claudius.

Del Wumbarea thought, that, having loſt her huſband, to be deprived of her ſon likewiſe, was more than fell to her ſhare in the common cauſe. She, too, had therefore applied to the baſha of Maſuah, who looked no farther than to a ranſom, and cared very little what prince reigned in Abyſſinia. He, therefore, undertook the management of the matter, and declared that he would ſend Menas to the Grand Signior, as ſoon as an anſwer ſhould come from Conſtantinople, while Claudius proteſted, that he would give up Gragné's ſon to the Portugueſe, if the ranſom for his brother was not immediately agreed on. This reſolution, on both ſides, quickly removed all objections. Four thouſand ounces of gold were paid to the Moors and the baſha; Menas was releaſed and ſent home to Claudius, who thereupon, in his turn, ſet Ali Gerad, ſon of Gragné by Del Wumbarea, at liberty, and with him Waraba Guta brother of the king of Adel, and this finiſhed the tranſaction.

I MUST here obſerve, that what Bermudes * ſays, that Del Wumbarea was taken priſoner and given in marriage to Arius Dias, was but a fable, as appears both from the beginning and ſequel of the narrative. Del Wumbarea having thus obtained her ſon, took a very early opportunity of ſhewing ſhe had not yet forgot the father. Nur, governor of Zeyla, ſon of Mudgid, who had ſlain the princes impriſoned upon the mountain of Geſhen, was deeply in love with this lady, and had deſerved well of her, for he had aſſiſted her in making her eſcape into Atbara that day her huſband was ſlain. But this heroine had conſtantly refuſed to liſten to any propoſals; nay, had vowed ſhe never would give her hand in marriage to any man till he ſhould firſt bring her the head of Claudius who had ſlain her huſband. Nur willingly accepted the condition, which gave him few rivals, but rather ſeemed to be reſerved for him, and out of the power of every one elſe.

CLAUDIUS, before this, had marched towards Adel, when he received a meſſage from Nur, that, though Gragné was dead, there ſtill remained a governor of Zeyla, whoſe family was choſen as a particular inſtrument for ſhedding the blood of the Abyſſinian princes; and deſired him, therefore, to be prepared, for he was ſpeedily to ſet out to come to him. Claudius had been employed in various journies through different parts of his kingdom, repairing the churches which Gragné and the other Moors had burnt; and he was then rebuilding that of Debra Werk † when this meſſage of

* See Bermudes's account of theſe times, printed at Liſbon by Francis Correa, A. D. 1565.

† The Mountain of Gold.

Nur was brought to him. This prince was of a temper never to avoid a challenge; and if he did not march againſt Nur immediately, he ſtaid no longer than to complete his army as far as poſſible. He then began his march for Adel, very much, as it is ſaid, againſt the advice of his friends.

That ſuch advice ſhould be given, at this particular time, appears ſtrange; for till now he had been conſtantly victorious, and his kingdom was perfectly obedient, which was not the caſe when any one of the former battles had been fought. But many prophecies were current in the camp, that the king was to be unfortunate this campaign, and was to loſe his life in it. Theſe unfortunate rumours tended much to diſcourage the army, at the ſame time that they ſeemed to have a contrary effect on the king, and to confirm him in his reſolution to fight. The truth is, the clergy, who had ſeen the country delivered by him from the Mahometans in a manner almoſt miraculous, and the conſtancy with which he withſtood the Romiſh patriarch, and fruſtrated the deſigns of his father againſt the Alexandrian church, and who had experienced his extreme liberality in rebuilding the churches, had wrought his young mind to ſuch a degree of enthuſiaſm that he was often heard to ſay, he preferred a death in the middle of an army of Infidels to the longeſt and moſt proſperous life that ever fell to the lot of man. It needed not a prophet to have foretold the likely iſſue of a battle in theſe circumſtances, where the king, careleſs of life, rather ſought death than victory; where the number of Portugueſe was ſo ſmall as to be incapable, of themſelves, to effect any thing; where, even of that number, thoſe that were attached to the king were looked upon as traitors by thoſe of the party of the patriarch; and where

the Abyſſinians, from their repeated quarrels and diſputes, heartily hated them all.

THE armies were drawn up and ready to engage, when the chief prieſt of Debra Libanos came to the king to tell him a dream, or viſion, which warned him not to fight; but the Moors were then advancing, and the king on horſeback made no reply, but marched briſkly forward to the enemy. The cowardly Abyſſinians, upon the firſt fire, fled, leaving the king engaged in the middle of the Mooriſh army with twenty horſe and eighteen Portugueſe muſqueteers, who were all ſlain around his perſon; and he himſelf fell, after fighting manfully, and receiving twenty wounds. His head was cut off, and by Nur delivered to Del Wumbarea, who directed it to be tied by the hair to the branch of a tree before her door, that ſhe might keep it conſtantly in ſight. Here it remained three years, till it was purchaſed from her by an Armenian merchant, her firſt grief, having, it is probable, ſubſided upon the acquiſition of a new huſband. The merchant carried the head to Antioch, and buried it there in the ſepulchre of a ſaint of the ſame name.

THUS died king Claudius in the 19th year of his reign, who, by his virtues and capacity, might hold a firſt place among any ſeries of kings we have known, victorious in every action he fought, except in that one only in which he died. A great ſlaughter was made after this among the routed, and many of the firſt nobility were ſlain in endeavouring to eſcape; among the reſt, the dreamer from Debra Lebanos, his viſion, by which he knew the king's death, not having extended ſo far as to reveal his own.

The Abyſſinians immediately transferred the name of this prince into their catalogue of Saints, and he is called St Claudius in that country to this day. Though endowed with every other virtue that entitled him to his place in the kalendar, he ſeems to have wanted one—that of dying in charity with his enemies.

This battle was fought on the 22d March 1559; and the victory gained by Nur was a complete one. The king and moſt of his principal officers were ſlain; great part of the army taken priſoners, the reſt diſperſed, and the camp plundered; ſo that no Mooriſh general had ever returned home with the glory that he did. But afterwards, in his behaviour, he exhibited a ſpectacle more memorable, and that did him more honour than the victory itſelf; for, when he drew near to Adel, he clothed himſelf in poor attire like a common ſoldier, and bare-headed, mounted on an ordinary mule, with an old ſaddle and tattered accoutrements, he forbade the ſongs and praiſe with which it is uſual to meet conquerors in that country when returning with victory from the field. He declined alſo all ſhare in the ſucceſs of that day, declaring that the whole of it was due to God alone, to whoſe mercy and immediate interpoſition he owed the deſtruction of the Chriſtian army.

The unworthy and unfortunate John Bermudes having arrived in Portugal from India, continued there till his death; and, in the inſcription over his tomb, is called only *Patriarch of Alexandria.* Yet it is clear, from the hiſtory of theſe times, that he was firſt ordained by the old patriarch Marcus; and that the pope, Paul III. only confirmed the ordination of this heretical ſchiſmatical prelate, though we have

ſtated that he was ordained by the pope, according to his own aſſertion, to be patriarch of Alexandria, Abyſſinia, and the Sea. Bermudes lived many years after this, and never reſigned any of his charges.

However, on his arrival in Europe, ſeveral ſuppoſed well-meaning perſons at Rome began to diſcourſe among themſelves, as if the converſion of Abyſſinia had not had a fair trial when truſted in the hands of ſuch a man as Bermudes. Scandalous ſtories as to his moral character were propagated at Rome to ſtrengthen this. He was ſaid to have ſtolen a golden cup in Abyſſinia*; but this does not appear to me in any ſhape probable, or like the manners of the man. He was a ſimple, ill-bred zealot, exceedingly vain, but in no-wiſe coveting riches or gain of any ſort. Sebaſtian king of Portugal, hearing the bad poſture of the Catholic religion in Abyſſinia, and the ſmall hopes of the converſion of that country, beſought the pope to ſend all the miſſionaries that were in that kingdom to preach the goſpel in Japan: but Oviedo ſtated ſuch ſtrong reaſons in his letter to Rome, that he was confirmed in the miſſion of Ethiopia.

* Purch. vol. 2.

MENAS,

MENAS, OR ADAMAS SEGUED.

From 1559 to 1563.

Baharnagaſh rebels, proclaims Taſcar King—Defeated by the King—Cedes Dobarwa to the Turks, and makes a League with the Baſha of Maſuah.

MENAS ſucceeded his brother Claudius, and found his kingdom in almoſt as great confuſion as it had been left by his father David. His firſt campaign was againſt Radaet the Jew. The king attacked him at his ſtrongeſt poſt in Samen, where he fought him with various ſucceſs; and the enterpriſe did not ſeem much advanced, when a hermit, reſiding in theſe mountains, probably tired with the neighbourhood of ſuch troubleſome people, came and told the king, it had been revealed to him that the conqueſt of the Jews was not allotted to him, nor was their time yet come.

WHILE the king ſeemed diſpoſed to avail himſelf of the hermit's warning, as a decent excuſe to get rid of an affair that did not ſucceed to his mind, an accident happened which determined him to quit his preſent undertaking. Two men, ſhepherds of Ebenaat in Beleſſen, from what injury is not known, engaged two of the king's ſervants, who were

were their relations, to introduce them into Menas's tent while ſleeping, with a deſign to murder him in his bed. While they were preparing to execute their intention, one of them ſtumbled over the lamp that was burning, and threw it down. The king awakening, and challenging him with a loud voice, the aſſaſſin ſtruck at him with his knife, but ſo feebly, from the fright, that he dropt the weapon upon the king's cloak without hurting him. They fled immediately out of the tent, but were taken at Ebenaat the next day, and brought back to the king, who gave orders to the judges to try them: they were both condemned, the one to be thruſt through with lances, the other to be ſtoned to death; after which, both their bodies were thrown to the dogs and to the beaſts of the field, as is practiſed conſtantly in all caſes of high-treaſon.

The ſecond year of the reign of Menas was uſhered in by a conſpiracy among the principal men of his court, at the head of which was Iſaac Baharnagaſh, an old and tried ſervant of his brother Claudius. This officer had been treated ill by Menas in the beginning of his reign; and, knowing the prince's violent and cruel diſpoſition, he could not perſuade himſelf that he was yet in ſafety.

Menas, to ſuppreſs this rebellion in its infancy, ſent Zara Johannes, an old officer, before him, with what forces he could collect in the inſtant; but Iſaac, informed of the bad ſtate of that army, and conſequently of his own ſuperiority, left him no time to ſtrengthen himſelf, but fell furiouſly upon him, and, with little reſiſtance, diſperſed his army. This loſs did not diſcourage the king; he had aſſembled a very conſiderable force, and, deſirous ſtill to encreaſe

its

it, he was advancing ſlowly that he might collect the ſcattered remains of the army that had been defeated. The Baharnagaſh, though victorious, ſaw with ſome concern that he could not avoid the king, whoſe courage and capacity, both as a ſoldier and a general, left him every thing to fear for his ſucceſs.

Ever ſince the maſſacre of the princes upon mount Geſhen by vizir Mudgid, in the reign of David III. none of the remains of the royal family had been confined as heretofore. Taſcar, Menas's nephew, was then at liberty, and, to ſtrengthen his cauſe, was proclaimed king by the Baharnagaſh, ſoon after the defeat of Menas's army under Zara Johannes. He was a prince very mild and affable in his manners, in all reſpects very unlike his uncle then reigning.

It was on the 1ſt of July 1561, that the king attacked the Baharnagaſh in the plain of Woggora; and, having entirely routed his army, Taſcar was taken priſoner, and ordered by the king his uncle to be carried to the brink of the high rock of Lamalmon, and, having been thrown over the ſteep precipice, he was daſhed to pieces. Iſaac himſelf eſcaped very narrowly, flying to the frontier of his government in the neighbourhood of Maſuah. The Baharnagaſh comprehended diſtinctly to what a dangerous ſituation he was now reduced. No hopes of ſafety remained but in a peace with the baſha. This at firſt appeared not eaſily obtained; for, while Iſaac remained in his duty in the reign of Claudius, he had fought with the baſha, and loſt his brother in the engagement. But preſent neceſſity overcame the memory of paſt injuries.

Samur

SAMUR Baſha was a man of capacity and temper; he had been in poſſeſſion of Maſuah ever ſince the year 1558. He ſaw his own evident intereſt in the meaſure, and appeared full as forward as the Baharnagaſh to complete it. Iſaac ceded Dobarwa to the baſha, and put him into immediate poſſeſſion of it, and all the low country between that and Maſuah. By this acquiſition, the Turks, before maſters of the ſea-coaſt, became poſſeſſed of the whole of the flat country correſponding thereto, as far as the mountains. Dobarwa is a large trading town, ſituated in a country abounding with proviſions of all kinds which Maſuah wanted, and it was the key of the province of Tigré and the high land of Abyſſinia.

MENAS, at his acceſſion, had received kindly the compliments of congratulation made by the Portugueſe patriarch, Oviedo. But hearing that he ſtill continued to preach, and that the effect of this was frequent diviſions and animoſities among the people, he called him into his preſence, and ſtrictly commanded him to deſiſt, which the patriarch poſitively refuſing, the king loſt all patience, and fell violently upon him, beating him without mercy, tearing his clothes and beard, and taking his chalice from him, that he might prevent him from ſaying maſs. He then baniſhed him to a deſert mountain, together with Francis Lopez, where for ſeven months he endured all manner of hardſhips.

THE king, in the mean time, publiſhed many rigorous proclamations againſt the Portugueſe. He would not permit them to marry with Abyſſinians. Thoſe that were already married he forbade to go to the Catholic churches with their huſbands; and, having again called the patriarch

into his preſence, he ordered him forthwith to leave his kingdom upon pain of death. But Oviedo, who ſeems to have had an ambition to be the proto-martyr, refuſed abſolutely to obey theſe commands. He declared that the orders of God were thoſe he obeyed, not the ſinful ordinances of man; and, letting ſlip his cloak from his ſhoulders, he offered his bare neck to the king to ſtrike. This anſwer and geſture ſo incenſed Menas, that, drawing his ſword, he would have very ſoon put the patriarch in poſſeſſion of the martyrdom he coveted, had it not been for the interpoſition of the queen and officers that ſtood round him.

Oviedo, after having been again ſoundly beaten, was baniſhed a ſecond time to the mountain; and in this ſentence were included all the reſt of the Portugueſe prieſts, as well as others. But the biſhop would not ſubmit to this puniſhment, but with the Portugueſe, his countrymen, joined the Baharnagaſh, who had already completed his treaty with Samur Baſha.

Isaac, before the Portugueſe prieſts, had ſhewn a deſire of becoming Catholic, and of protecting, or even embracing, their religion; and they, on their part, had aſſured him of a powerful and ſpeedy ſuccour from India, which was juſt what he wanted; and with this view he had placed himſelf to the greateſt advantage, avoiding a battle, and awaiting thoſe auxiliaries, of the arrival of which the king was very apprehenſive. But the ſeaſon of ſhips coming from India had paſſed without any appearance of Portugueſe, and the king was reſolved to try his fortune without expecting what another ſeaſon might produce. On the other hand, Iſaac, ſtrengthened by his league with the baſha, thought himſelf

himſelf in a condition to take the field, rather than to leſſen his reputation by conſtantly declining battle.

In theſe diſpoſitions both armies met, and the confederates were again beaten by the king, with very little loſs or reſiſtance. This battle was fought on the 20th of April 1562. Immediately after this victory the king marched to Shoa, and ſent ſeveral detachments of his army before him to ſurpriſe the robbers called Dobas, and drive off their cattle. What he intended by retiring ſo far from his enemies, the Baharnagaſh and Baſha, is what we do not know. Both of them were yet alive, but probably ſo weakened by their laſt defeat as to leave no apprehenſions of being able to moleſt the country by any incurſions.

The king, being advanced into the province of Ogge, was taken ill of the Kolla, or low-country fever, and, after a few days illneſs, he died there on the 13th of January 1563, leaving three ſons, Sertza Denghel, who ſucceeded him, Taſcar, and Leſana Chriſtos.

Some European hiſtorians * have advanced that Menas was defeated and ſlain in this laſt engagement juſt now mentioned. This, however, is expreſsly contradicted in the annals of theſe times, which mention the death of the king in the terms I have here related; nor were either of the chiefs of the rebels, the Baſha or Baharnagaſh, ſlain that day. The rebellion ſtill continued, Iſaac having proclaimed a prince of the name of John to be king in place of Taſcar, his deceaſed brother.

* Ludolf, lib. 2. cap. 6.

MENAS was a prince of a very moroſe and violent diſpoſition, but very well adapted to the time in which he lived; brave in his perſon, active and attentive to the affairs of government. He was ſober, and an enemy to all ſorts of pleaſure; frugal, and, in his dreſs or ſtile of living, little different from any ſoldier in his army.

THESE qualities made him feared by the great, without being beloved by the common ſoldiers accuſtomed to the liberality and magnificence of Claudius; and this want of popularity gave the Romiſh prieſts an opportunity to blacken his character beyond what in truth he deſerved. Thus, they ſay, that he had changed his religion during his impriſonment, and turned Mahometan, and that it was from the Moors he learned that ferocity of manners. But to this the anſwer is eaſy, That the manners of his own countrymen, that is of mountaineers without any profeſſion but war and blood, in which they had been exerciſed for centuries, were, probably of themſelves, much more fierce and barbarous than any he could learn among the people of Adel, occupied from time immemorial in commerce and the purſuit of riches, and neceſſarily engaged in an honeſt intercourſe, and practice of hoſpitality, with all the various nations that traded with them. Beſides, were this otherwiſe, he never had any ſociety with theſe Moors. Baniſhment to the top of a mountain* would have been his fate in Abyſſinia, had he lived a few years earlier or later than he did. Yet the mountain upon which the royal family was confined had not yet produced one of ſuch ſavage manners; and it is not probable

* To Geſhen or Wechné.

probable that he was more ſtrictly guarded in Adel than he would have been in his own country.

As to his religion, we can only ſay that he abhorred the Romiſh faith, from the behaviour of thoſe that profeſſed it; and, that he had abundant reaſon ſo to do, we need only appeal to their conduct in the preceding reign, according to the accounts given by the Catholics themſelves. Let any man conſider a king ſuch as Claudius was; ſeated on his throne in the midſt of his courtiers and captains; curſed and excommunicated; called heretic and liar to his face by an ignorant peaſant and ſtranger, ſuch as John Bermudes; attacked in the night, and forced to fly for his life by a body of ſtrangers who depended upon him for their daily bread: Next conſider Menas, at his firſt acceſſion, deſiring their patriarch to deſiſt from preaching a religion that was fatal to the quiet of his kingdom by ſowing diſſentions among it as it had done in the two preceding reigns; and then figure a fanatic prieſt, declaring that he would neither depart nor obey theſe orders; then ſay what would have been done to ſtrangers in France, Spain, or Portugal, that had behaved in this manner to the ſovereign or miniſters of theſe countries. Add to this, that all the Portugueſe to a man appeared in the army of a rebel ſubject in the laſt battle, ſupporting the cauſe of a pretender to his crown. If, upon a fair review of all this, it is any matter of ſurpriſe that he ſhould be averſe to ſuch people and behaviour, I am no judge of the fair feelings of man, and the duty a prince owes to himſelf or poſterity, his country or dignity.

As to his inclination to the Mahometan religion, the fact is, that he oppoſed it even with his ſword during his whole

reign, and never ſwerved from his attachment to the church of Alexandria, or his friendſhip and reſpect to the Abuna Youſef, to the end of his life, as far as we can learn from hiſtory. And leaſt, of all people in the world, does it become the Roman Catholics to accuſe him of being Mahometan, becauſe a letter is ſtill extant to Menas from pope Paul III *, wherein the pope ſtiles him beloved *ſon in Chriſt*, and the *moſt holy of prieſts*.

SERTZA DENGHEL, OR MELEC SEGUED.

From 1563 to 1595.

King crowned at Axum—Abyſſinia invaded by the Galla—Account of that People—The king defeats the Army of Adel—Beats the Falaſha, and kills their King—Battle of the Mareb—Baſha ſlain, and Turks expelled from Dobarwa—King is poiſoned—Names Za Denghel his Succeſſor.

MENAS was ſucceeded by his ſon, Sertza Denghel, who took the name of Melec Segued. He was only twelve years old when he came to the throne, and was crowned at Axum with all the ancient ceremonies. The beginning of

* See Le Grande's Hiſtory of Abyſſinia.

his reign was marked by a mutiny of his ſoldiers, who, joining themſelves to ſome Mahometans, plundered the town, and then diſbanded. A miſunderſtanding alſo happened with Ayto Hamelmal, ſon to Romana Werk, daughter of Hatzé Naod, which threatened many misfortunes in its conſequences.

Tecla Asfadin, governor of Tigré, was ordered by the king to march againſt him; and the armies fought with equal advantage. But Hamelmal dying ſoon after, his party diſperſed without further trouble. Faſil, too, his couſin, who had been appointed governor of Damot, rebelled ſoon after, and was defeated by the king, who this year (the fourth of his reign) commanded his army for the firſt time in perſon, and greatly contributed to the victory, though he was but then ſixteen years of age.

The ſixth year of his reign he marched againſt a clan of Galla, called Azé, whom he often beat, ſtaying in the country two whole years. Upon his return, he found the Baharnagaſh, Iſaac and Harla, and other malcontents, when a ſort of a pacification followed; and having received from the rebels conſiderable preſents, he ſat down at Dobit, a ſmall town in Dembea, where he paſſed the winter.

All this time Oviedo and the Portugueſe did not appear at court. The king, however, did not moleſt the prieſts in their baptiſms, preachings, or any of their functions. He often ſpake favourably of their moral characters, their ſobriety, patience, and decency of their lives; but he condemned deciſively the whole of their religious tenets, which he pronounced to be full of danger and contradiction, and deſtructive

ſtructive of civil order and monarchical government. At this period the Galla again made an irruption into Gojam.

It is now time we ſhould ſpeak of this nation, which has contributed more to weakening and reducing the Abyſſinian empire, than all their civil wars, and all the foreign enemies put together. When I ſpoke of the languages of the ſeveral nations in Abyſſinia, I took occaſion merely to mention the origin of theſe Galla, and their progreſs northward, till their firſt hoſtile appearance in Abyſſinia. I ſhall now proceed to lay before the reader what further I have collected concerning them. Many of them were in the king's ſervice while I was in Abyſſinia; and, from a multitude of converſations I had with all kinds of them, I flatter myſelf I have gathered the beſt accounts regarding theſe tribes.

The Galla are a very numerous nation of Shepherds, who probably lived under or beyond the Line. What the cauſe of their emigration was we do not pretend to ſay with certainty, but they have, for many years, been in an uniform progreſs northward. They were at firſt all infantry, and ſaid the country they came from would not permit horſes to breed in it, as is the caſe in 13° north of the Line round Sennaar. Upon coming northward, and conquering the Abyſſinian provinces, and the ſmall Mahometan diſtricts bordering on them, they have acquired a breed of horſes, which they have multiplied ſo induſtriouſly that they are become a nation of cavalry, and now hold their infantry in very little eſteem.

As

As under the Line, to the ſouth of Abyſſinia, the land is exceedingly high, and the ſun ſeldom makes its appearance on account of the continual rains, the Galla are conſequently of a brown complexion, with long black hair. Some, indeed, who live in the valleys of the low country, are perfectly black. Although the principal food of this people at firſt was milk and butter, yet, when they advanced into drier climates, they learned of the Abyſſinians to plow and ſow the fields, and to make bread. They ſeem to affect the number ſeven, and have divided their immenſe multitude threefold by that number. They all agree, that, when the nation advanced to the Abyſſinian frontiers, they were then in the centre of the continent. The ground beginning to riſe before them, ſeven of their tribes or nations filed off to the eaſt towards the Indian Ocean; and, after making ſettlements there, and multiplying exceedingly, they marched forward due ſouth into Bali and Dawaro, which they firſt waſted by conſtant incurſions, then conquered and ſettled there in the reign of David III. in 1537.

Another diviſion of ſeven tribes went off to the weſt about the ſame time, and ſpread themſelves in another ſemicircle round the ſouth ſide of the Nile, and all along its banks round Gojam, and to the eaſt behind the country of the Agows, (which are on the eaſt ſide of the Nile) to that of the Gongas and Gafats. The high woody banks of this river have hitherto been their barrier to the ſouthward; not but that they have often fought for, and often conquered, and ſtill oftener plundered, the countries on the Abyſſinian ſide of that river; and, from this reign downwards, the ſcene of action with the Abyſſinians has conſtantly been on the eaſt ſide of the river. All I mean is, they have never made a ſet-

tlement on the Abyſſinian ſide of the Nile, except ſuch tribes of them as, from wars among themſelves, have gone over to the king of Abyſſinia and obtained lands on the banks of that river, oppoſite to the nation they have revolted from, againſt which they have ever after been the ſecureſt bulwark.

A THIRD diviſion of ſeven tribes remained in the center, due ſouth of the low country of Shoa; and theſe are the leaſt known, as having made the feweſt incurſions. They have, indeed, poſſeſſed Walaka, a ſmall province between Amhara and Shoa; but this has been permitted politically by the governor of Shoa, as a barrier between him and Abyſſinia, on whoſe ſovereign he ſcarcely acknowledges any dependence but for form's ſake, his province being at preſent an hereditary government deſcending from father to ſon.

ALL theſe tribes of Galla gird Abyſſinia round at all points from eaſt to weſt, making inroads, and burning and murdering all that fall into their hands. The privities of the men they cut off, dry, and hang them up in their houſes. They are ſo mercileſs as to ſpare not even women with child, whom they rip up in hopes of deſtroying a male. The weſtern part of theſe Galla, which ſurrounds the peninſula of Gojam and Damot, are called the Boren Galla; and thoſe that are to the eaſt are named Bertuma Galla, though this laſt word is ſeldom uſed in hiſtory, where the Galla to the weſtward are called Boren; and the others Galla merely, without any other addition. All theſe tribes, though the moſt cruel that ever appeared in any country, are yet governed by the ſtricteſt diſcipline at home, where the ſmalleſt broil or quarrel among individuals is taken cognizance of, and receives immediate puniſhment.

Each of the three diviſions of Galla elect a king, that is, there is a king for every ſeven tribes. There is alſo a kind of nobility among them, from whoſe families alone the ſovereign can be choſen. But there are certain degrees of merit (all warlike) that raiſe, from time to time, their plebeian families to nobility, and the right of ſuffrage. No one of theſe nobles can be elected till paſt forty years of age, unleſs he has ſlain with his own hand a number of men which, added to his years, makes up forty.

The council of each of the ſeven tribes firſt meets ſeparately in its own diſtrict: Here it determines how many are neceſſary to be left behind for the governing, guarding, and cultivating the territory, while thoſe fixed upon by moſt votes go as delegates to meet the repreſentatives of the other nations at the domicil, or head-quarters of the king, among the tribe from which the ſovereign of the laſt ſeven years was taken. Here they ſit down under a tree which ſeems to be ſacred, and the god of all the nations. It is called Wanzey*; has a white flower, and great quantity of foliage, and is very common in Abyſſinia. After a variety of votes, the number of candidates is reduced to four, and the ſuffrage of ſix of theſe nations go then no farther; but the ſeventh, whoſe turn it is to have a king out of their tribe, chooſe, from among the four, one, whom they crown with a garland of Wanzey, and put a ſceptre, or bludgeon, of that wood in his hands, which they call Buco.

* See the article Wanzey in the Appendix.

THE king of the weſtern Galla is ſtiled Lubo, the other Mooty. At this aſſembly, the king allots to each their ſcene of murder and rapine; but limits them always to ſpeedy returns in caſe the body of the nation ſhould have occaſion for them. The Galla are reputed very good ſoldiers for ſurpriſe, and in the firſt attack, but have not conſtancy or perſeverance. They accompliſh incredible marches; ſwim rivers holding by the horſes tail, (an exerciſe to which both they and their horſes are perfectly trained;) do the utmoſt miſchief poſſible in the ſhorteſt time; and rarely return by the ſame way they came. They are excellent light horſe for a regular army in an enemy's country.

IRON is very ſcarce among them, ſo that their principal arms are poles ſharpened at the end, and hardened in the fire, which they uſe like lances. Their ſhields are made of bulls hides of a ſingle fold, ſo that they are very ſubject to warp in heat, or become too pliable and ſoft in wet weather. Notwithſtanding theſe diſadvantages, the report of their cruelty made ſuch an impreſſion upon the Abyſſinians, that, on their firſt engagements they rarely ſtood firmly the Galla's firſt onſet. Beſides this, the ſhrill and very barbarous noiſe they are always uſed to make at the moment they charge, uſed to terrify the horſes and riders, ſo that a flight generally followed the attack made by Galla horſe.

THESE melancholy and frantic howls I had occaſion to hear often in thoſe engagements that happened while I was in Abyſſinia. The Edjow, a body of Galla who had been in the late king Joas's ſervice, and were relations to him by his mother, who was of that clan of ſouthern Galla, were conſtantly in the rebel army, and always in the moſt diſ-

affected part, who, with the troops of Begemder and Lasta, attacked the king's household, where he was in person; and, though they behaved with a bravery even to rashness, most of them lost their lives, upon the long pikes of the king's black horse, without ever doing any notable execution, as these horses were too-well trained to be at all moved with their shrieks, when they charged, though their bravery and fidelity merited a better fate.

The women are said to be very fruitful. They do not confine themselves even a day after labour, but wash and return to their work immediately. They plow, sow, and reap. The cattle tread out the corn, but the men are the herdsmen, and take charge of the cattle in the fields.

Both sexes are something less than the middle size, exceedingly light and agile. Both, but especially the men, plait their hair with the bowels and guts of oxen, which they wear likewise, like belts, twisted round their middle; and these, as they putrify, occasion a terrible stench. Both copiously anoint their heads and bodies with butter, or melted grease, which is continually raining from them, and which indicates that they came from a country hotter than that which they now possess. They greatly resemble the Hottentots in this filthy taste of dress. The rest of their body is naked; a piece of skin only covers them before; and they wear a goat's skin on their shoulders, in shape of a woman's handkerchief, or tippet.

It has been said *, that no religion was ever discovered among

* Jerome Lobo Hist. of Abyssinia ap. Le Grande.

among them. I imagine that the facts upon which this opinion is founded have never been ſufficiently inveſtigated. The Wanzey-tree, under which their kings are crowned, is avowedly worſhipped for a god in every tribe. They have certain ſtones alſo, for an object of their devotion, which I never could ſufficiently underſtand to give further deſcription of them. But they certainly pay adoration to the moon, eſpecially the new moon, for of this I have frequently been a witneſs. They likewiſe worſhip certain ſtars in particular poſitions, and at different times of the year, and are, in my opinion, ſtill in the ancient religion of Sabaiſm. All of them believe that, after death, they are to live again; that they are to riſe with their body, as they were on earth, to enter into another life they know not where, but they are to be in a ſtate of body infinitely more perfect than the preſent, and are to die no more, nor ſuffer grief, ſickneſs, or trouble of any kind. They have very obſcure, or no ideas at all of future puniſhment; but their reward is to be a moderate ſtate of enjoyment with the ſame family and perſons with which they lived on earth. And this is very nearly the ſame belief with the other Pagan nations in Africa with which I have converſed intimately; and this is what writers generally call a belief of the immortality of the ſoul. Nor did I ever know one ſavage that had a more diſtinct idea of it, or ever ſeparated it from the immortality of the body.

The Galla to the ſouth are moſtly Mahometans; on the eaſt and weſt chiefly Pagans. They intermarry with each other, but ſuffer no ſtrangers to live among them. The Moors, however, by courage, patience, and attention, have found out the means of trading with them in a tolerable degree

degree of ſafety. The goods they carry are coarſe Surat blue cloaths, called *marowty;* alſo myrrh and ſalt. This laſt is the principal and moſt valuable article.

The Galla ſometimes marry the Abyſſinian women, but the iſſue of thoſe marriages are incapable of all employment. Their form of marriage is the following: The bridegroom, ſtanding before the parents of the bride, holds graſs in his right hand and the dung of a cow in his left. He then ſays, "May this never enter, nor this ever come out, "if he does not do what he promiſes;" that is, may the graſs never enter the cow's mouth to feed it, or may ſhe die before it is diſcharged. Matrimonial vows, moreover, are very ſimple; he ſwears to his bride that he ſhall give her meat and drink while living, and bury her when dead.

Polygamy is allowed among them, but the men are commonly content with one wife. Such, indeed, is their moderation in this reſpect, that it is the women that ſolicit the men to increaſe the number of their wives. The love of their children ſeems to get a ſpeedy aſcendency over paſſion and pleaſure, and is a noble part of the character of theſe ſavages that ought not to be forgot. A young woman, having a child or two by her huſband, intreats and ſolicits him that he would take another wife, when ſhe names to him all the beautiful girls of her acquaintance, eſpecially thoſe that ſhe thinks likelieſt to have large families. After the huſband has made his choice, ſhe goes to the tent of the young woman, and ſits behind it in a ſupplicant poſture, till ſhe has excited the attention of the family within. She then, with an audible voice, declares who ſhe is; that ſhe is daughter of ſuch a one; that her huſband has

has all the qualifications for making a woman happy; that ſhe has only two children by him; and, as her family is ſo ſmall, ſhe comes to ſolicit their daughter for her huſband's wife, that their families may be joined together, and be ſtrong; and that her children, from their being few in number, may not fall a prey to their enemies in the day of battle; for the Galla always fight in families, whether againſt one another, or againſt other enemies.

When ſhe has thus obtained a wife for her huſband, ſhe carries her home, puts her to bed with her huſband, where, having left her, ſhe feaſts with the bride's relations. There the children of the firſt marriage are produced, and the men of the bride's family put each their hands upon theſe children's heads, and afterwards take the oath in the uſual manner, to live and die with them as their own offspring. The children, then, after this ſpecies of adoption, go to their relations, and viſit them for the ſpace of ſeven days. All that time the huſband remains at home in poſſeſſion of his new bride; at the end of which he gives a feaſt, when the firſt wife is ſeated by her huſband, and the young one ſerves the whole company. The firſt wife from this day keeps her precedence; and the ſecond is treated by the firſt wife like a grown up-daughter. I believe it would be very long before the love of their families would introduce this cuſtom among the young women of Britain.

When a father dies and leaves many children, the eldeſt ſucceeds to the whole inheritance without diviſion; nor is he obliged, at any time, or by any circumſtance, to give his brothers a part afterwards. If the father is alive when the ſon firſt begins to ſhave his head, which is a declaration of manhood,

manhood, he gives two or three milk-cows, or more, according to his rank and fortune. Theſe, and all their produce, remain the property of the child to whom they were given by his father; and theſe the brother is obliged to pay to him upon his father's death, in the ſame number and kinds. The eldeſt brother, is moreover, obliged to give the ſiſter, whenever ſhe is marriageable, whatever other proviſion the father may have made in his lifetime for her, with all its increaſe from the day of the donation.

When the father becomes old and unfit for war, he is obliged to ſurrender his whole effects to his eldeſt ſon, who is bound to give him aliment, and nothing elſe; and, when the eldeſt brother dies, leaving younger brothers behind him, and a widow young enough to bear children, the youngeſt brother of all is obliged to marry her; but the children of the marriage are always accounted as if they were the eldeſt brother's; nor does this marriage of the youngeſt brother to the widow entitle him to any part of the deceaſed's fortune.

The ſouthern Galla are called Elma Kilelloo, Elma Gooderoo, Elma Robali, Elma Doolo, Elma Bodena, Elma Horreta, and Elma Michaeli; theſe are the ſeven ſouthern nations which the Mahometan traders paſs through in their way to Narea, the ſouthernmoſt country the Abyſſinians ever conquered.

The weſtern Galla for their principal clans have the Djawi, Edjow or Ayzo, and Toluma, and theſe were the clans we principally fought with when I was in Abyſſinia. They are chiefly Pagans. Some of their children, who were left

young in court, when their fathers fled, after the murder of the late king their maſter, were better Chriſtians and better ſoldiers than any Abyſſinians we had.

It is not a matter of ſmall curioſity to know what is their food, that is ſo eaſy of carriage as to enable them to traverſe immenſe deſerts, that they may, without warning, fall upon the towns and villages in the cultivated country of Abyſſinia. This is nothing but coffee roaſted, till it can be pulveriſed, and then mixed with butter to a conſiſtency that will ſuffer it to be rolled up in balls, and put in a leather bag. A ball of this compoſition, between the circumference of a ſhilling and half-a-crown, about the ſize of a billiard-ball, keeps them, they ſay, in ſtrength and ſpirits during a whole day's fatigue, better than a loaf of bread, or a meal of meat. Its name in Arabia and Abyſſinia is Bun, but I apprehend its true name is Caffé, from Caffa the ſouth province of Narea, whence it is firſt ſaid to have come; it is white in the bean. The coffee-tree is the wood of the country, produced ſpontaneouſly everywhere in great abundance, from Caffa to the banks of the Nile.

Thus much for this remarkable nation, whoſe language is perfectly different from any in Abyſſinia, and is the ſame throughout all the tribes, with very little variation of dialect. This is a nation that has conquered ſome of the fineſt provinces of Abyſſinia, and of whoſe inroads we ſhall hereafter have occaſion to ſpeak continually; and it is very difficult to ſay how far they might not have accompliſhed the conqueſt of the whole, had not providence interpoſed in a manner little expected, but more efficacious than a thouſand armies, and all the inventions of man.

The

The Galla, before their inroads into Abyſſinia, had never in their own country ſeen or heard of the ſmall-pox. This diſeaſe met them in the Abyſſinian villages. It raged among them with ſuch violence, that whole provinces conquered by them became half-deſert; and, in many places, they were forced to become tributary to thoſe whom before they kept in continual fear. But this did not happen till the reign of Yaſous the Great, at the beginning of the preſent century, where we ſhall take freſh notice of it, and now proceed with what remains of the reign of Sertza Denghel, whom we left with his army in the 9th year of his reign, reſiding at Dobit, a ſmall town in Dembea, watching the motion of the rebels, Iſaac Baharnagaſh, and others, his confederates.

The tenth year of his reign, as ſoon as the weather permitted him, the king went into Gojam to oppoſe the inroads of the Djawi, a clan of the weſtern or Boren Galla, who then were in poſſeſſion of the Buco, or royal dignity, among the ſeven nations. But they had repaſſed the Nile upon the firſt news of the king's march, without having time to waſte the country. The king then went to winter in Bizamo, which is ſouth of the Nile, the native country of theſe Galla, the Djawi.

If this nation, the Galla, has deſerved ill of the Abyſſinians by the frequent inroads made into their country, they muſt, however, confeſs one obligation, that in the end they entirely ruined their ancient enemy, the Mahometan king of Adel, and reduced him to a ſtate of perfect inſignificance.

Sertza Denghel then returned with his army into Dembea, where, finding the militia of that province much diſaffected by communication with the Mooriſh ſoldiers ſettled among them from Gragnè's time to this day, and that moſt of them had in their hearts forſaken the Chriſtian religion, and were all ready to fail in their allegiance, he aſſembled the greateſt part of them without their arms, and, ſurrounding them with his ſoldiers, cut them to pieces, to the number of 3000 men.

In the 13th year of his reign, Mahomet king of Adel marched out of his own country with the view of joining the Baſha and Baharnagaſh. But the king, ever watchful over the motions of his enemies, ſurpriſed the Baharnagaſh before his junction either with Mahomet or the baſha, and defeated or diſperſed his army, obliging him to fly in diſguiſe, with the utmoſt danger of being taken priſoner, to hide himſelf with the baſha at Dobarwa. He then appointed Darguta, governor of Tigré, an old and experienced officer, giving him the charge of the province, and to watch the baſha; and, leaving with him his wounded, (and in their place taking ſome freſh ſoldiers from Darguta) he, by forced marches, endeavoured to meet Mahomet, who had not heard of his victory over Iſaac; and being informed that the king of Adel was encamped on the hither ſide of the river Wali, having paſſed it to join Iſaac, the king, by a ſudden movement, croſſed the river, and came oppoſite to Mahomet's quarters, who was then ſtriking his tents, having juſt heard of the fate of the Baharnagaſh. Mahomet and his whole army were ſtruck with a panic at this unexpected appearance of the king on the oppoſite ſide of the river, which had cut off his retreat to Adel. Fearing, however,

however, there might ſtill be an enemy behind him, and that he ſhould be hemmed in between both, he reſolved to paſs, but did it in ſo tumultuous a manner that the king's army had no trouble but to ſlaughter thoſe who arrived at the oppoſite bank. Great part of the cavalry, ſeeing the fate of their companions at the ford, attempted to paſs above and below by ſwimming: but, though the river was deep and ſmooth, the banks were high, and many were drowned, not being able to ſcramble up on the other ſide. Many were alſo deſtroyed by ſtones, and the lances of Sertza Denghel's men, from the banks above; ſome paſſed, however, joining Mahomet, and leaving the reſt of the army to attempt a paſſage at the ford, croſſed with the utmoſt ſpeed lower down the river without being purſued, and carried the news of their own defeat to Adel.

The whole Mooriſh army periſhed this day except the horſe, either by the ſword or in the river; nor had the Moors received ſo ſevere a blow ſince the defeat of Gragné by Claudius. The king then decamped, and took poſt at Zarroder, on the frontiers of Adel, with a deſign to winter there and lay waſte the country, into which he intended to march as ſoon as the fair weather returned. But it was the misfortune of this great prince, that his enemies were ſituated at the two moſt diſtant extremities of the kingdom. For the Galla attacked Gojam on the weſt, at the very time he prepared to enter Adel on the eaſt. Without loſs of time, however, he traverſed the whole kingdom of Abyſſinia, and came up with the Boren Galla upon the river Madge, but no action of conſequence followed. The Galla, attempting the king's camp in the night, and finding themſelves too weak to carry it, retreated immediately into their own country.

While

While returning to Dembea, he met a party of the Falaſha, called Abaſi, at Wainadega, and entirely deſtroyed them, ſo that not one eſcaped.

The king was now ſo formidable that no army of the enemy dared to face him, and he obliged the Falaſha to give up their king Radaet, whom he baniſhed to Wadge; and the four following years he ſpent in ravaging the country of his enemies the Galla, in Shat and Bed, and that of the Falaſha in Samen and Serkè, where he beat Caliph king of the Falaſha, who had ſucceeded Radaet.

The Galla, in advancing towards Gojam and Damot, had over-run the whole low country between the mountains of Narea and the Nile. The king, deſirous to open a communication with a country where there was a great trade, eſpecially for gold, croſſed the Nile in his way to that province, the Galla flying everywhere before him. He was received with very great joy by the prince of that country, who looked upon him as his deliverer from thoſe cruel enemies. Here he received many rich preſents; more particularly a large quantity of gold, and he wintered at Cutheny in that province, where Abba Hedar his brother died, having been blown up with gun-powder, with his wife and children. The Nareans deſired, this year, to be admitted to the Chriſtian faith; and they were converted and baptiſed by a miſſion of prieſts ſent by the king for that purpoſe.

At the time he was reſcuing the kingdom of Narea, Cadward Baſha, a young officer of merit and reputation, lately come from Conſtantinople to Dawaro as baſha of Maſuah, had begun his command with making inroads into Tigrè,

and driving off a number of the inhabitanrs into ſlavery. The king, neceſſarily engaged at a diſtance, ſuffered theſe injuries with a degree of impatience; and, after having provided for the ſecurity of the ſeveral countries immediately near him, he marched with his army directly for Woggora, committing every degree of exceſs in his march, in order to provoke the Falaſha to deſcend from their heights and offer him battle.

A FRUGAL œconomical people, ſuch as the Jews are, could not bear to ſee their cattle and crops deſtroyed in ſo wanton a manner before their very faces. They came, therefore, down in immenſe numbers to attack the king, one of the moſt excellent generals Abyſſinia ever had, at the head of a ſmall, but veteran army. Geſhen, brother of the famous Gideon, was then king of the Jews, and commanded the army of his countrymen. The battle was fought on the plain of Woggora on the 19th of January 1594, with the ſucceſs that was to be expected. Four thouſand of the Jewiſh army were ſlain upon the ſpot; and, among them, Geſhen, their unfortunate king and leader.

AFTER this victory, Sertza Denghel marched his army into Kuara, through the country where the Jews had many ſtrong-holds, and received everywhere their ſubmiſſion. Then turning to the left, he came through the country of the Shangalla, called Woombarea, and ſo to that of the Agows. There he heard that new troubles were meditating in Damot; but the inhabitants of that province were not yet ripe enough to break out into open rebellion.

That he might not, therefore, have two enemies at ſuch a diſtance from each other upon his hands at once, this year, as ſoon as the rains were over, he determined to march and attack the baſha. The baſha was very ſoon informed of his deſigns, and as ſoon prepared to meet them; ſo that the king found him already in the field, encamped on his own ſide of the Mareb, but without having committed, till then, any act of hoſtility. He marched out of his camp, and formed, upon ſeeing the royal army approach; leaving a ſufficient field for the king to draw up in, if he ſhould incline to croſs the river, and attack him.

This confident, rather than prudent conduct of the baſha, did not intimidate the king, who being uſed to improve every advantage coolly, and without bravado, embraced this very opportunity his enemy choſe to give him. He formed, therefore, on his own ſide of the Mareb, and paſſed it in as good order as poſſible, conſidering it is a ſwift ſtream, and very deep at that ſeaſon of the year. He halted ſeveral times while his men were in the water, to put them again in order, as if he had expected to be attacked the moment he landed on the other ſide. The baſha, a man of knowledge in his profeſſion, who ſaw this cautious conduct of the king, is ſaid to have cried out, "How unlike he is to what I have "heard of his father!" alluding to the general raſh behaviour of the late king Menas whilſt at the head of his army.

Sertza Denghel having left all his baggage on the other ſide, and paſſed the river, drew up his army in the ſame deliberate manner in which he had croſſed the Mareb, and formed oppoſite to the baſha; as if he had been acting un-

der him, and by his orders, availing himſelf with great attention of all the advantages the ground could afford him. The baſha, confident in the ſuperior valour of his troops, thought, now he had got the king between him and the river, that he would eaſily that day finiſh Sertza Denghel's life and reign.

The battle began with the moſt determined reſolution and vigour on both ſides. The Abyſſinian foot drove back the Turkiſh infantry; and the king, diſmounting from his horſe, with his lance and ſhield in his hand, and charging at their head, animated them to preſerve that advantage. On the other hand, the baſha, who had ſoon put to flight part of the Abyſſinian horſe with whom he had engaged, fell furiouſly upon the foot commanded by the king, the Turks making a great carnage among them with their ſabres, and the affair became but doubtful, when Robel, gentleman of the bed-chamber to the king, who commanded the pike-men on horſeback, part of the king's houſehold troops, ſeeing his maſter's danger, charged the Turkiſh horſe where he ſaw the baſha in perſon, and, clearing his way, broke his pike upon an officer of the baſha who carried the ſtandard immediately before him, and threw him dead at his feet. Being without other arms, he then drew the ſhort crooked knife which the Abyſſinians always carry in their girdle, and, puſhing up his horſe cloſe before the baſha could recover from his ſurpriſe, he plunged it in his throat, ſo that he expired inſtantly. So unlooked-for a ſpectacle ſtruck a panic into the troops. The Turkiſh horſe firſt turned their backs, and a general route followed.

The baſha's body was carried upon a mule out of the field, and ſtruck a terror into all the Mahometans wherever it paſſed. It no ſooner entered Dobarwa than it was obliged to be carried out at the other end of the town. Sertza Denghel was not one that ſlumbered upon a victory. He entered Dobarwa ſword in hand, putting all the Pagans and Mahometans that fell in his way to death, and, in this manner, purſued them to the frontiers of Maſuah, leaving many to die for want of water in that deſert.

The king, in honour of this brave action performed by Robel, ordered what follows to be writ in letters of gold, and inſerted in the records of the kingdom: "Robel, ſervant to Sertza Denghel, and ſon to Menetcheli, ſlew a Turkiſh baſha on horſeback with a common knife."

Sertza Denghel, having thus delivered himſelf from the moſt formidable of his enemies, marched through Gojam again into Narea, extirpating, all the way he went, the Galla that obſtructed his way to that ſtate. He left an additional number of prieſts and monks to inſtruct them in the Chriſtian religion; though there are ſome hiſtorians of this reign who pretend that it was not till this ſecond viſit that Narea was converted.

However this may be, victory had everywhere attended his ſteps, and he was now preparing to chaſtiſe the malcontents at Damot, when he was accoſted by a prieſt, famous for his holineſs and talent for divination, who warned him not to undertake that war. But the king, expreſſing his contempt of both the meſſage and meſſenger, declared his fixed reſolution to invade Damot without delay.

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The prieſt is ſaid to have limited his advice ſtill further, and to have only begged him to remember not to eat the fiſh of a certain river in the territory of Giba in the province of Shat. The king, however, fluſhed with his victory over the Boren Galla, forgot the name of the river and the injunction; and, having ate fiſh out of this river, was immediately after taken dangerouſly ill, and died on his return.

The writer of his life ſays, that the fatal effects of this river were afterwards experienced in the reign of Yaſous the Great, at the time in which he wrote, when the king's whole army, encamped along the ſides of this river, were taken with violent ſickneſs after eating the fiſh caught in it, and that many of the ſoldiers died. Whether this be really fact or not, I will not take upon me to decide. Whether fiſh, or any other animal, living in water impregnated with poiſonous minerals, can preſerve its own life, and yet imbibe a quantity of poiſon ſufficient to deſtroy the men that ſhould eat it, ſeems to me very doubtful. Something like this is ſaid to happen in oyſters, which are found on copperas beds, or have preparations of copperas thrown upon them to tinge a part of them with green. I do not, however, think it likely, that the creature would live after this metallic doſe, or preſerve a taſte that would make it food for man till he accumulated a quantity ſufficient to deſtroy him.

Sertza Denghel was of a very humane affable diſpoſition, very different from his father Menas. He was ſtedfaſt in his adherence to the church of Alexandria, and ſeemed perfectly indifferent as to the Romiſh church and clergy. In converſation, he frequently condemned their tenets, but always commended the ſobriety and ſanctity of their lives.

He left no legitimate ſons, but many daughters by his wife Mariam Sena; and two natural ſons, Za Mariam and Jacob. He had alſo a nephew called *Za Denghel*, ſon of his brother Leſana Chriſtos.

It is abſolutely contrary to truth, what is ſaid by Telſez and others, that the illegitimate ſons have no right to ſucceed to the crown. There is, indeed, no ſort of difference, as may be ſeen by many examples in the courſe of this hiſtory.

Sertza Denghel at firſt ſeemed to have intended his nephew, Za Denghel, to ſucceed him, a prince who had every good quality; was arrived at an age fit for governing, and had attended him and diſtinguiſhed himſelf in great part of his wars. But, being upon his death-bed, he changed his mind, probably at the inſtigation of the queen and the ambitious nobles, who deſired to have the government in their own hands during a long minority. His ſon Jacob, a boy of ſeven years old, was now brought into court, and treated as heir-apparent, which everybody thought was but natural and pardonable from the affection of a father.

At laſt when he found that he was ſick to death, the intereſt and love of his country ſeemed to overcome even the ties of blood; ſo that, calling his council together around his bed, he deſigned his ſucceſſor in this laſt ſpeech: 'As 'I am ſenſible I am at the point of death, next to the care of 'my ſoul, I am anxious for the welfare of my kingdom. My 'firſt idea was to appoint Jacob my ſon to be ſucceſſor; and 'I had done ſo unleſs for his youth, and it is probable nei-'ther you nor I could have cauſe to repent it. Conſidering,

'however, the ſtate of my kingdom, I prefer its intereſt to 'the private affection I bear my ſon; and do, therefore, here- 'by appoint Za Denghel my nephew to ſucceed me, and be 'your king; and recommend him to you as fit for war, ripe 'in years, exemplary in the practice of every virtue, and 'as deſerving of the crown by his good qualities, as he is by 'his near relation to the royal family.' And with theſe words the king expired in the end of Auguſt 1595, and was buried in the iſland Roma.

As ſoon as Sertza Denghel died, the nobility reſumed their former reſolutions. The very reaſons the dying king had given them, why Za Denghel was fitted to reign, were thoſe for the which they were determined to reject him; as they, after ſo long a reign as the laſt, were perfectly weary at being kept in their duty, and deſired nothing more than an infant king and a long minority: this they found in Jacob.

ZA DENGHEL.

From 1595 to 1604.

Za Denghel dethroned—Jacob a Minor ſucceeds—Za Denghel is reſtored—Baniſhes Jacob to Narea—Converted to the Romiſh Religion—Battle of Bartcho, and Death of the King.

SERTZA DENGHEL had ſeveral daughters, one of whom was married to Kefla Wahad, governor of the province of Tigrè, and another to Athanaſius, governor of Amhara. Theſe two were the moſt powerful men then in the kingdom. The empreſs and her two ſons-in-law ſaw plainly, that the ſucceſſion of Za Denghel, a man of ripe years, poſſeſſed of every requiſite for reigning, was to exclude them from any ſhare in government but a ſubaltern one, for which they were to ſtand candidates upon their own merits, in common with the reſt of the nobility.

ACCORDINGLY, no ſooner was Sertza Denghel dead, perhaps ſome time before, but a conſpiracy was formed to change the order of ſucceſſion, and this was immediately executed by order of this triumvirate, who ſent a body of ſoldiers and ſeized Za Denghel, and carried him cloſe priſoner to

Dek, a large iſland in the lake Tzana, belonging to the queen, where he was kept for ſome time, till he eſcaped and hid himſelf in the wild inacceſſible mountains of Gojam, which there form the banks of the Nile. They carried their precautions ſtill further; and ſubſequent events after ſhewed, that theſe were well-grounded. They ſent a party of men at the ſame time to ſurpriſe Socinios, but he, ſufficiently upon his guard, no ſooner ſaw the fate of his couſin, Za Denghel, than he withdrew himſelf, but in ſuch a manner that ſhewed plainly he knew the value of his own pretenſions, and was not to be an unconcerned ſpectator if a revolution was to happen.

In order to underſtand perfectly the claims of thoſe princes, who were by turns placed on the throne in the bloody war that followed, it will be neceſſary to know that the emperor David III. had three ſons: The eldeſt was Claudius, who ſucceeded him in the empire; the hiſtory of whoſe reign we have already given: The ſecond was Jacob, who died a minor before his brother, but left two ſons, Taſcar and Facilidas: The third ſon was Menas, called Adamas Segued, who ſucceeded Claudius his brother in the empire; whoſe reign we have likewiſe given in its proper place.

Menas had four ſons; Sertza Denghel, called Melec Segued, who ſucceeded his father in the empire, and whoſe hiſtory we have juſt now finiſhed; the ſecond Aquieter; the third Abatè; and the fourth, Leſana Chriſtos; whoſe ſon was that Za Denghel of whom we were laſt ſpeaking, appointed to ſucceed to the throne by his uncle Sertza Denghel, when on his death-bed.

Tascar, the ſon of Jacob, died a minor; he rebelled againſt his uncle Menas, in confederacy with the Baharnagaſh, as we have already ſeen; and his army being beat by his uncle and ſovereign, he was, by his order, thrown over the ſteep precipice of Lamalmon, and daſhed to pieces. Facilidas, the ſecond remaining ſon of the ſame minor Jacob, lived many years, poſſeſſed great eſtates in Gojam, and died afterwards in battle, fighting againſt the Galla, in defence of theſe poſſeſſions.

This Facilidas had a natural ſon named Socinios, who inherited his father's poſſeſſions; was nephew to Sertza Denghel, and couſin-german to Za Denghel appointed to ſucceed to the throne; ſo that Za Denghel being once removed, as Jacob had been poſtponed, there could be no doubt of Socinios's claim as the neareſt heir-male to David III. commonly called Wanag Segued.

Socinios, from his infancy, had been trained to arms, and had undergone a number of hardſhips in his uncle's wars. Part of his eſtate had been ſeized, after his father's death, by men in power, favourites of Sertza Denghel; and he hoped for a complete reſtitution of them from Za Denghel his couſin, when he ſhould ſucceed, for theſe two were as much connected with each other by friendſhip and affection, as they were by blood. Nor would any ſtep, ſays the hiſtorian, have ever been taken by Socinios towards mounting the throne, had Za Denghel his couſin ſucceeded, as by right he ought.

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In the mean time, he was at the head of a conſiderable band of ſoldiers; had aſſiſted Faſa Chriſtos, governor of Gojam, in defeating the Galla, who had over-run that province; and, by his courage and conduct that day, had left a ſtrong impreſſion upon the minds of the troops that he would ſoon become the moſt capable and active ſoldier of his time.

The queen and her two ſons-in-law being diſappointed in their attempt upon Socinios, were obliged to take the only ſtep that remained in their choice, which was to appoint the infant Jacob * king, a child of ſeven years old, and put him under the tutelage of Ras Athanaſius.

The empreſs Mariam Sena, and her two ſons-in-law, had gained to their party Za Selaſſé, a perſon of low birth, native of an obſcure nation of Pagans, called Guraguè, a man eſteemed for bravery and conduct, and beloved by the ſoldiers; but turbulent and ſeditious, without honour, gratitude, or regard, either to his word, to his ſovereign, or the intereſts of his country.

Jacob had ſuffered patiently the direction of thoſe that governed him, ſo long as the excuſe of his minority was a good one. But being now arrived at the age of 17, he began to put in, by degrees, for his ſhare in the direction of affairs; and obſerving ſome ſteps that tended to prolong the government of his tutors, by his own power he baniſhed Za Selaſſé, the author of them, into the diſtant kingdom of Narea.

* The name of infant-king ſeems to have been given as a nick-name in Abyſſinia, and is preſerved to this day.

This vigorous proceeding alarmed the empreſs and her party. They ſaw that the meaſure taken by Jacob would preſently lead all good men and lovers of their country to ſupport him, and to annihilate their power. They reſolved not to wait till this took place, but inſtantly to reſtore Za Denghel, whom, with great difficulty, they found hid in the mountains between Gojam and Damot. And, to remove every ſuſpicion in Za Denghel's breaſt, Ras Athanaſius repaired to the palace, giving Jacob publicly, even on the throne, the moſt abuſive and ſcurrilous language, calling him an obſtinate, ſtubborn, fooliſh boy; declaring him degraded from being king, and announcing to his face the coming of Za Denghel to ſupplant him. Jacob's behaviour on ſo unexpected an occaſion was not ſuch as Athanaſius's raſh ſpeech led to expect. He gave a cool and mild reply to theſe invectives; but, finding himſelf entirely in his enemy's power, without loſing a moment, he left his palace in the night, taking the road to Samen, not doubting of ſafety and protection if he could reach his mother's relations among thoſe high, rocky mountains.

Fortune at firſt ſeemed to favour his endeavours. He arrived at a ſmall village immediately in the neighbourhood of the country to which he was going; but there he was diſcovered and made priſoner; carried back and delivered to Za Denghel his rival, whom he found placed on his throne.

In all theſe caſes, it is the invariable, though barbarous practice of Abyſſinia, to mutilate any ſuch pretender to the throne, by cutting off his noſe, ear, hand, or foot, as they ſhall be inclined the patient ſhould die or live after the operation,

ation, it being an eſtabliſhed law, that no perſon can ſucceed to the throne, as to the prieſthood, without being perfect in all his limbs. Za Denghel, as he could not adopt ſo inhuman a procedure even with a rival, contented himſelf with only baniſhing Jacob to Narea.

Ever ſince that period of Menas's reign, when Samur, baſha of Maſuah, had been put in poſſeſſion of Dobarwa in virtue of a treaty with Iſaac Baharnagaſh, then in rebellion, the Catholic religion was left deſtitute of all ſupport, the fathers that had remained in Abyſſinia being dead, and the entry into that kingdom ſhut up by the violent animoſity of the Turks, and the cruelties they exerciſed upon all miſſionaries that fell into their hands. The few Catholics that remained were abſolutely deprived of all aſſiſtance, when Melchior Sylvanus, an Indian vicar of the church of St Anne at Goa, was pitched upon as a proper perſon to be ſent to their relief. His language, colour, eaſtern air and manners, ſeemed to promiſe that he would ſucceed, and baffle the vigilance of the Turks.

He arrived at Maſuah in 1597, and entered Abyſſinia unſuſpected; but the power of the Turk being much leſſened by the great defeat given them by Sertza Denghel, who ſlew Cadward Baſha, and retook Dobarwa and all its dependencies, as has been already mentioned, a very conſiderable part of their former dangers, the miſſionaries might now hope to eſcape. But there ſtill remained others obſtructing the communication with India, which, however, were ſurmountable, and gave way, as moſt of the kind do, to prudence, courage, and perſeverance.

Accordingly, in the year 1600, Peter Paez, the moſt capable, as well as moſt ſucceſsful miſſionary that ever entered Ethiopia, arrived at Maſuah, after having ſuffered a long impriſonment, and many other hardſhips, on his way to that iſland; and, taking upon him the charge of the Portugueſe, relieved Melchior Sylvanus, who returned to India.

Paez, however, did not preſs on to court as his predeceſſors, and even his ſucceſſors conſtantly did, but, confining himſelf to the convent of Fremona in Tigré, he firſt ſet himſelf by an invincible application to attain the knowledge of the Geez written language, in which he arrived to a degree of knowledge ſuperior to that of the natives themſelves. He then applied to the inſtruction of youth, keeping a ſchool, where he taught equally the children of the Portugueſe, and thoſe of the Abyſſinians. The great progreſs made by the ſcholars ſpeedily ſpread abroad the reputation of the maſter. Firſt of all, John Gabriel, one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed officers of the Portugueſe, ſpoke of him in the warmeſt terms of commendation to Jacob, then upon the throne, who ſent to Paez, and ordered his attendance as ſoon as the rainy ſeaſon ſhould be over.

In the month of April 1604, Peter, attended only by two of his young diſciples, preſented himſelf to the king, who then held his court at Dancaz, where he was received with the ſame honours as are beſtowed upon men of the firſt rank, to the great diſcontent of the Abyſſinian monks, who eaſily foreſaw that their humiliation would certainly follow this exaltation of Petros; nor were they miſtaken. In a diſpute held before the king next day, Peter produced the two boys, as more than ſufficient to ſilence all the theologians in

in Abyſſinia. Nor can it ever be doubted, by any who know the ignorance of theſe brutiſh prieſts, but that the victory, in theſe ſcholaſtic diſputes, would be fairly, eaſily, and completely on the ſide of the children.

MASS was then ſaid according to the uſage of the church of Rome, which was followed by a ſermon (among the firſt ever preached in Abyſſinia,) but ſo far ſurpaſſing, in elegance and purity of diction, any thing yet extant in the learned language, Geez, that all the hearers began to look upon this as the firſt miracle on the part of the preacher.

ZA DENGHEL was ſo taken with it, that, from that inſtant, he not only reſolved to embrace the Catholic religion, but declared this his reſolution to ſeveral friends, and ſoon after to Paez himſelf, under an oath of ſecrecy that he ſhould conceal it for a time. This oath, prudently exacted from Peter, was as imprudently rendered uſeleſs by the zeal of the king himſelf, who being of too ſanguine a diſpoſition to temporize after he was convinced, publiſhed a proclamation, forbidding the religious obſervation of Saturday, or the Jewiſh ſabbath, for ever after. He likewiſe ordered letters to be wrote to the pope Clement VIII. and to Philip III. king of Spain and Portugal, wherein he offered them his friendſhip, whilſt he requeſted mechanics to aſſiſt, and Jeſuits to inſtruct his people.

THESE ſudden and violent meaſures were preſently known; and every wretch that had, from other cauſes, the ſeeds of rebellion ſown in his heart, began now to pretend they were only nouriſhed there by a love and attachment to the true religion.

MANY

MANY of the courtiers followed the king's example; ſome as courtiers for the ſake of the king's favour, and meaning to adhere to the religion of Rome no longer than it was a faſhion at court, promoted their intereſt, and expoſed them to no danger; others, from their firm attachment to the king, the reſolution to ſupport him as their rightful ſovereign, and a confidence in his ſuperior judgment, and that he beſt knew what was moſt for the kingdom's advantage in its preſent diſtracted ſtate, and for the confirmation of his own power, ſo intimately connected with the welfare of his people. Few, very few it is believed, adopted the Catholic faith, from that one diſcourſe only, however pure the language, however eloquent the preacher. A hundred years and more had paſſed without convincing the Abyſſinians in general, or without any material proof that they were prepared to be ſo.

HOWEVER, the Jeſuits have quoted an inſtance of this inſtantaneous converſion by the ſermon, which, for their credit, I will not omit, though no notice is taken of it in the annals of thoſe times, where it is not indeed to be expected, nor do I mean that it is leſs credible on this account.

AN Abyſſinian monk, of very advanced years, came forward to Peter Paez, and ſaid in a loud voice before the king, "Although I have lived to a very great age, without a doubt of the Alexandrian faith, I bleſs God that he has ſpared me to this day, and thereby given me an opportunity of chooſing a better. The things we knew before, you have ſo well explained, that they become ſtill more intelligible; and we are thereby confirmed in our belief. Thoſe things that were difficult, and which we could hardly underſtand, you have

have made ſo clear, that we now wonder at our own blindneſs in not having ſeen them plainly before. For theſe benefits which I now confeſs to have received, I here make my declaration, that it is my ſtedfaſt purpoſe, with the aſſiſtance of Almighty God, to live and die in the faith you profeſs, and have now preached."

Among thoſe of the court moſt attached to the king was Laeca Mariam, the inſeparable companion of his good and bad fortune, who had followed his maſter from principles of duty and affection, without deſigning to throw away a conſideration upon what were likely to be the conſequences to himſelf. He was reputed, in his character and abilities as a ſoldier, to be equal to Za Selaſſé, but a very different man, compared to him in his qualities of civil life; for he was ſober in his general behaviour, ſparing in diſcourſe, and much more ready to do a good office than to promiſe one; very affable and courteous in his manner, and of ſo humble and unaſſuming a deportment, that it was thought impoſſible to be real in a man, who had ſo often proved his ſuperiority over others upon trial.

This man, a true royaliſt, was one of thoſe that embraced the Catholic religion that day, probably following the example of the king; and this, in the hands of wicked men their enemies, became very ſoon a pretence for the murder of both; for Za Selaſſé, impatient of a rival in any thing, more eſpecially in military knowledge, began to hold ſeditious aſſemblies, and eſpecially with the monks, whom he taught to believe what the king's conduct daily confirmed, that the Alexandrian faith was totally reprobated, and no religion

religion would be tolerated but that of the church of Rome.

GOJAM, a province always inveterate againſt any thing that bore the ſmalleſt inclination to the church of Rome, declared againſt the king; and, before he went to join his aſſociates, the traitor, Za Selaſſé, in a conference he had with the Abuna Petros, propoſed to him to abſolve Za Denghel's ſubjects and ſoldiers from their oaths of allegiance to their ſovereign. The Abuna, a man of very corrupt and bad life, very hearty in the cauſe, and an enemy to the king, was ſtaggered at this propoſal; not that he was averſe to it, becauſe it might do miſchief, but becauſe he doubted whether any ſuch effect would follow it as Za Selaſſé expected; and he, therefore, aſked what good he expected from ſuch a novelty? when this traitor aſſured him, that it would be moſt efficacious for that very reaſon, becauſe it was then firſt introduced: the Abuna forthwith abſolved the ſoldiers and ſubjects of Za Denghel from their allegiance, declaring the king excommunicated and accurſed, together with all thoſe that ſhould ſupport him, or favour his cauſe.

I MUST here obſerve, that, though we are now writing the hiſtory of the 17th century, this was the firſt example of any prieſt excommunicating his ſovereign in Abyſſinia, except that of Honorius, who excommunicated Amda Sion for the repeated commiſſion of inceſt. And the doubt the zealot Abuna Petros had of its effect as being a novelty, which fact the Jeſuits themſelves atteſt, ſhews it was a practice that had not its origin in the church of Alexandria. Neither had theſe curſes of the Abuna any viſible effect, till Za Selaſſé had put himſelf at the head of an army raiſed in Gojam.

The king was prepared to meet him, and ready to march from Dancaz.

Za Denghel immediately marched out into the plain of Bartcho, and in the way was deſerted, firſt by Ras Athanaſius, then by many of his troops; and, by this great deſertion in his army, found the firſt effects of the Abuna's curſes, inſomuch, that John Gabriel, a Portugueſe officer of the firſt diſtinction, adviſed the king to retire in time, and avoid a battle, by flying to ſtrong-holds for a ſeaſon, till the preſent deluſion among his ſubjects ſhould ceaſe. But the king, thinking himſelf diſhonoured by avoiding the defiance of a rebel, reſolved upon giving Za Selaſſè battle, who, being an able general, knew well the danger he would incur by delay.

It was October 13th 1704 that the king, after drawing up his army in order of battle, placing 200 Portugueſe, with a number of Abyſſinian troops, on the right, took to himſelf the charge of the left, and called for Peter Paez to give him abſolution; but that Jeſuit was occupied at a convenient diſtance in Tigré, by his exorciſms deſtroying ants, butterflies, mice, locuſts, and various other enemies, of much more importance, in his opinion, than the life of a king who had been blindly, but directly conducted to ſlaughter by his fanatical preachings.

The battle began with great appearance of ſucceſs. On the right, the Portugueſe, led by old and veteran officers, deſtroyed and overturned every thing before them with their fire-arms: but on the left, where the king commanded, things went otherwiſe, for the whole of this diviſion

fled, excepting a body of nobility, his own officers and companions, who remained with him, and fought manfully in his defence. Above all, the king himſelf, trained to a degree of excellence in the uſe of arms, ſtrong and agile in body, in the flower of his age, and an excellent horſeman, performed feats of valour that ſeemed above the power of man: but he and his attendants being ſurrounded by the whole army of Za Selaſſé, and decreaſing in number, were unable to ſupport any longer ſuch diſadvantage.

Laeca Mariam, ſolicitous only for the king's ſafety, charging furiouſly every one that approached, was thruſt through with a lance by a common ſoldier who had approached him unobſerved. The king, deſirous only to avenge his death, threw himſelf like lightning into the oppoſite ſquadron, and received a ſtroke with a lance in his breaſt, which threw him from his horſe on the ground. Grievous as the wound was, he inſtantly recovered himſelf, and, drawing his ſword, continued to fight with as much vigour as ever. He was now hemmed in by a ring of ſoldiers, part of whom, afraid of encountering him, remained at a diſtance, throwing miſſile weapons without good direction or ſtrength, as if they had been hunting ſome fierce wild beaſt. Others, wiſhing to take him priſoner, abſtained from ſtriking him, out of regard to his character and dignity; but the traitor, Za Selaſſé, coming up at that inſtant, and ſeeing the king almoſt fainting with fatigue, and covered with wounds, pointed his lance, and, ſpurring his horſe, furiouſly ſtruck him in the middle of the forehead, which blow threw the king ſenſeleſs to the ground, where he was afterwards ſlain with many wounds.

The

The battle ended with the death of Za Denghel; many ſaw him fall, and more his body after the defeat; but no one choſe to be the firſt that ſhould in any way diſpoſe of it, or care to own that they knew it. It lay in this abject ſtate for three days, till it was buried by three peaſants in a corner of the plain, in a little building like a chapel (which I have ſeen) not above ſix feet high, under the ſhade of a very fine tree, in Abyſſinia called *ſaſſa*: there it lay till ten years after, when Socinios removed it from that humble mauſoleum, and buried it in a monaſtery called Daga, in the lake Dembea, with great pomp and magnificence.

The grief which the death of Za Denghel occaſioned was ſo univerſal, and the odium it brought upon the authors of it ſo great, that neither Za Selaſſé nor Ras Athanaſius dared for a time take one ſtep towards naming a ſucceſſor, which the fear of Za Denghel, and the uncertainty of victory, had prevented them from doing by common conſent before the battle. There was no doubt but that the election would fall upon Jacob, but he was far off, confined in the mountainous country of Caffa in Narea. The diſtance was great; the particular place uncertain; the way to it lay through deſerts, always dangerous on account of the Galla, and often impaſſable.

JACOB.

From 1604 to 1605.

Makes Propoſals to Socinios, which are rejected—Takes the Field—Bad Conduct and Defeat of Za Selaſſé—Battle of Debra Zeit—Jacob defeated and ſlain.

DURING the interim, Socinios appeared in Amhara, not as one offering himſelf as a candidate to be ſupported by the ſtrength and intereſt of others, but like a conqueror at the head of a ſmall but well-diſciplined army of veteran troops, ready to compel by force thoſe who ſhould refuſe to ſwear allegiance to him from conviction of his right.

THE firſt ſtep he took was to ſend Bela Chriſtos, a nobleman of known worth, to Ras Athanaſius then in Gojam, ſtating to him his pretenſions to ſucceed Za Denghel in the kingdom, deſiring his aſſiſtance with his army, and declaring that he would acknowledge the ſervice done him as ſoon as it was in his power. Without waiting for an anſwer, at the head of his little army he paſſed the Nile, and entered Gojam. He then ſent a ſecond meſſage to Ras Athanaſius, acquainting him that he was at hand, and ordering him to prepare to receive him as his ſovereign.

THIS

This abrupt and confident conduct of Socinios very much diſconcerted Ras Athanaſius. He had as yet concerted nothing with his friend Za Selaſſé, and it was now late to do it. There was no perſon then within the bounds of the empire that ſolicited the crown but Socinios, and he was now at hand, and very much favoured by the ſoldiers. For theſe reaſons, he thought it beſt to put a good face upon the matter in his preſent ſituation. He, therefore, met Socinios as required, and joined his army, as if it had been his free choice, and ſaluted him king in the midſt of repeated chearful congratulations of both armies now united.

Having ſucceeded in this to his wiſh, Socinios loſt no time to try the ſame experiment with Za Selaſſé, who was then in Dembea, the province of which he was governor. To him he ſent this meſſage, "That God by his grace having called him to the throne of his anceſtors, he was now on his march to Dembea, where he requeſted him to prepare his troops to receive him, and diſpoſe them to deſerve the favours that he was ready to confer upon all of them." Za Selaſſé remained for a while as if thunder-ſtruck by ſo peremptory an intimation. Of all maſters he moſt wiſhed for Jacob, becauſe, from experience, he thought he could govern him. Of all maſters he moſt feared Socinios, becauſe he knew he poſſeſſed capacity and qualities that would naturally determine him to govern alone. After having concerted with his friends, he ſent Socinios anſwer, "That not having till now known any thing of his claims or intentions, he had ſent an invitation to Jacob into Narea, whoſe anſwer he expected; but that, in caſe Jacob did not appear, he then would receive Socinios with every mark of duty and affection, and hoped he would grant him the

ſhort delay to which he had inadvertently, though innocently, engaged himſelf."

THIS anſwer did in no ſhape pleaſe Socinios, who diſpatched the meſſenger immediately with this declaration, "That he was already king, and would never cede his right to Jacob, who was depoſed and judged unworthy to reign; no nor even to his father Melec Segued, though he ſhould riſe again from the grave, and claim the throne he had ſo long ſat upon."

ZA SELASSE, eaſily penetrating that there was no peace in Socinios's intentions, firſt impriſoned the meſſenger, and, inſtead of another anſwer, marched inſtantly with his whole army to ſurpriſe him before he had time to take his meaſures. And in this he ſucceeded. For Socinios being at that inſtant overtaken by ſickneſs, and not knowing what truſt to put in Athanaſius's army, retired in haſte to the mountains of Amhara; while Athanaſius alſo withdrew his troops till he ſhould know upon what terms he ſtood both with Za Selaſſé and the king.

STILL no return came from Jacob. The winter was nearly paſt, and not only the ſoldiers, but people of all ranks began to be weary of this interregnum, and heartily wiſhed for their ancient form of government. They ſaid, That ſince Jacob did not appear, there could be no reaſon for excluding Socinios, whoſe title was undoubted, and who had all the qualities neceſſary to make a good king.

ZA SELASSE ſeeing this opinion gained ground among his troops, and fearing they might mutiny and leave him alone,

made a virtue of neceſſity: he diſpatched an ambaſſador to acknowledge Socinios as his ſovereign, and declare that he was ready to ſwear allegiance to him. Socinios received this embaſſy with great apparent complacency. He ſent in return a monk, in whom he confided, a perſon of great worth and dignity, to be his repreſentative, and receive the homage of Za Selaſſé and his army. On the news of this monk's approach, Za Selaſſè ſent on his part ten men, the moſt reſpectable in his camp, to meet this repreſentative of the king, and conduct him into the camp, where Za Saleſſé, and all his troops, did homage, and ſwore allegiance to Socinios. Feaſts and preſents were now given in the camp, as is uſual at the acceſſion of a new king to the throne, and all the army abandoned themſelves to joy.

These good tidings were immediately communicated both to Socinios and Ras Athanaſius. But, in the midſt of this rejoicing, a meſſenger came from Jacob, informing Za Selaſſè that he was then in Dembea; that he had conferred upon him the title of Ras and Betwudet, that is, had made him the king's lieutenant-general throughout the whole empire. Za Selaſſé, in poſſeſſion of the height of his wiſhes, and making an ample diſtribution among his troops, determined immediately to march and join Jacob in Dembea; but firſt he wrote privately to the ten men that had accompanied the monk to Socinios, that they ſhould withdraw themſelves as ſuddenly and privately as poſſible before the coming of Jacob was known. Eight of theſe were lucky enough to do ſo; two of them were overtaken in the flight and brought back to Socinios, who ordered them to immediate execution.

Ras

Ras Athanasius, ſeeing the proſperous turn that Jacob's affairs had taken, renounced his oath to Socinios, and repaired to Jacob at Coga, while Socinios retired into Amhara at the head of a very reſpectable army, waiting an opportunity to repay Jacob for his ambition, and Athanaſius and Za Selaſſé for their treaſon and perjury towards him.

Although Jacob was now again ſeated on the throne, ſurrounded by the army and great officers of the empire, his mind was always diſturbed with the apprehenſion of Socinios. In order to free himſelf from this anxiety, he employed Socinios's mother in an application to her ſon, with an offer of peace and friendſhip; promiſing, beſides, that he would give him in property the kingdoms of Amhara, Walaka, and Shoa, and all the lands which his father had ever poſſeſſed in any other part of Abyſſinia. Socinios ſhortly anſwered, "That what God had given him, no man could take from him; that the whole kingdom belonged to him, nor would he ever relinquiſh any part of it but with his life. He adviſed Jacob to conſider this, and peaceably reſign a crown which did not belong to him; and the attempting to keep which, would involve him and his country in a ſpeedy deſtruction."

Upon this defiance, ſeeing Socinios implacable, Jacob took the field, and was followed by Za Selaſſé. But this proud and inſolent traitor, who never could confine himſelf within the line of his duty, even under a king of his own chooſing, would not join his forces with Jacob, but vain-glorioufly led a ſeparate army, ſubject to his orders alone. In this manner, having ſeparate camps, chooſing different ground, and ſometimes at a conſiderable diſtance from each other, they

they came up with Socinios in Begemder. Jacob advanced ſo near him that his tent could be diſtinctly ſeen from that of Socinios, and, on the morrow, Jacob and Za Selaſſé, drawing up their armies, offered Socinios battle.

That wiſe prince ſaw too well that he was overmatched; and, though he deſired a battle as much as Jacob, it was not upon ſuch terms as the preſent. He declined it, and kept hovering about them as near as poſſible on the heights and uneven ground, where he could not be forced to fight till it perfectly ſuited his own intereſt.

This refuſal on the part of Socinios did but increaſe Za Selaſſé's pride. He deſpiſed Jacob as a general, and thought that Socinios declining battle was owing only to the apprehenſion he had of his preſence, courage, and abilities. He continued parading with the ſeparate army, perfectly intoxicated with confidence and an imaginary ſuperiority, neglecting all the wholeſome rules of war rigidly adhered to by great generals for the ſake of diſcipline, however diſtant they may be from their enemy.

It was not long before this was told Socinios, who ſoon ſaw his advantage in it, and thereupon reſolved to fight Za Selaſſé ſingly, and watch attentively till he ſhould find him as far as poſſible from Jacob. Nor did he long wait for the occaſion; for Za Selaſſé, attempting to lead his army through very uneven and ſtony ground, called *the Paſs of Mount Defer*, and at a conſiderable diſtance from Jacob, Socinios attacked him while in the paſs ſo rudely, that his army, entangled in broken and unknown ground, was ſurrounded and almoſt cut to pieces. Za Selaſſé, with a few followers,

ſaved themſelves by the goodneſs of their horſes, and joined the king, being the firſt meſſengers of their own defeat.

JACOB received the news of this misfortune without any apparent concern. On the contrary, he took Za Selaſſé roundly to taſk for having loſt ſuch an army by his miſconduct; and from that time put on a coolneſs of carriage towards him that could not be bruiked by ſuch a character. He made direct propoſals to Socinios to join him, if he could be aſſured that his ſervices would be well received. Socinios, though he repoſed no confidence in one that had changed ſides ſo often, was yet, for his own ſake, deſirous to deprive his rival of an officer of ſuch credit and reputation with the ſoldiers. He therefore promiſed him a favourable reception; and, a treaty being concluded, Socinios marched into Gojam, followed by Jacob, and there was joined by Za Selaſſé whom Jacob had made governor of that province.

JACOB, not knowing how far this deſertion might extend, and to ſhew Socinios the little value he ſet upon his new acquiſition, immediately advanced towards him, and offered him battle. This was what Socinios very earneſtly wiſhed for; but, as his army was much inferior to Jacob's, he ſeemed to decline it from motives of fear, till he had found ground proper for his army to engage in with advantage.

JACOB, ſenſible of the great ſuperiority he had, (hiſtorians ſay it was nearly thirty to one) grew every day more impatient to bring Socinios to an engagement, fearing he might retreat, and thereby prolong the war, which he had no doubt would be finiſhed by the firſt action. Therefore he

was anxious to keep him always in ſight, without regarding the ground through which his eagerneſs led him. Several days the two armies marched ſide by ſide in ſight of each other, till they came to Debra Tzait, or the Mountain of Olives. There Jacob halted; he then advanced a little further, and ſeeing Socinios encamped, he did the ſame in a low and very diſadvantageous poſt on the banks of the river Lebart.

Socinios having now obtained his deſire, early in the morning of the 10th of March 1607 fell ſuddenly upon Jacob cooped up in a low and narrow place, which gave him no opportunity of availing himſelf of his numbers. Jacob ſoon found that he was over-reached by the ſuperior generalſhip of his enemy. Socinios's troops were ſo ſtrongly poſted, that Jacob's ſoldiers found themſelves in a number of ambuſhes they had not foreſeen, ſo that, fighting or flying being equally dangerous to them, his whole army was nearly deſtroyed in the field, or in the flight, which was moſt ardently and vigorouſly followed till night, with little loſs on the part of Socinios.

This battle, deciſive enough by the route and diſperſion of the enemy, became ſtill more ſo from two circumſtances attending it: The firſt was the death of his competitor, who fell unknown among a herd of common ſoldiers in the beginning of the action, without having performed, in his own perſon, any thing worthy of the character he had to ſuſtain, or that could enable any ſpectator to give an account in what place he fell; the conſequence of which was, that he was thought to be alive many years afterwards. The ſecond was the death of the Abuna Petros. This prieſt

had diſtinguiſhed himſelf in Za Denghel's reign, by abſolving the king's ſubjects and ſoldiers from their oaths of allegiance, which was followed by the unfortunate death of Za Denghel in the plain of Bartcho. Vain of the importance he had acquired by the ſucceſs of his treaſon, he had purſued the ſame conduct with regard to Socinios, and followed Jacob to battle, where, truſting to his character and habit for the ſafety of his perſon, he neglected the danger that he ran amidſt a flying army. While occupied in uttering vain curſes and excommunications againſt the conquerors, he was known, by the crucifix he held in his hand, by a Mooriſh ſoldier of Socinios, who thruſt him through with a lance, then cut his head off, and carried it to the king.

The Abyſſinian annals ſtate, that, immediately after ſeeing the head of Abuna Peter, Socinios ordered a retreat to be ſounded, and that no more of his enemies ſhould be ſlain. On the contrary, the Jeſuits have ſaid, that the purſuit was continued even after night; for that a body of horſe, among whom were many Portugueſe belonging to the army of Jacob, flying from Socinios's troops, fell over a very high precipice, it being ſo dark that they did not diſcover it; and that one ſoldier, called Manuel Gonſalez, finding his horſe leave him, as it were flying, lighted luckily on a tree, where, in the utmoſt trepidation, he ſat all night, not knowing where he was. This fear was greatly encreaſed in the morning, when he beheld the horſes, and the men who were his companions, lying dead and daſhed to pieces in the plain below.

Ras Athanasius, who had followed the party of Jacob, narrowly eſcaped by the ſwiftneſs of his horſe, and hid himſelf in the monaſtery of Dima, at no great diſtance from the

the field of battle; and Peter Paez, from remembrance of his former good offices, having recommended him to Sela Chriſtos, Socinios's brother-in-law, he was pardoned; but loſing favour every day, his effects and lands having been taken from him on different occaſions, he is ſaid at laſt to have died for want, juſtly deſpiſed by all men for unſteadineſs in allegiance to his ſovereigns, by which he had been the occaſion of the death of two excellent princes, had frequently endangered the life and ſtate of the third, and had been the means of the ſlaughter of many thouſands of their ſubjects, worthier men than himſelf, as they fell in the diſcharge of their duty. But before his death he had ſtill this further mortification, that his wife, daughter of Sertza Denghel, called Melec Segued, voluntarily forſook his bed and retired to a ſingle life.

SOCINIOS,

SOCINIOS, OR MELEC SEGUED.

From 1605 to 1632.

Socinios embraces the Romiſh Religion—War with Sennaar—With the Shepherds—Violent Conduct of the Romiſh Patriarch—Laſta rebels—Defeated at Wainadega—Socinios reſtores the Alexandrian Religion—Reſigns his Crown to his eldeſt Son.

SOCINIOS, now univerſally acknowledged as king, began his reign with a degree of moderation which there was no reaſon to expect of him. Often as he had been betrayed, many and inveterate as his enemies were, now he had them in his power, he ſought no vengeance for injuries which he had ſuffered, but freely pardoned every one, receiving all men graciouſly without reproach or reflections, or even depriving them of their employments.

BEING informed, however, that one Mahardin, a Moor, had been the firſt to break through that reſpect due to a king, by wounding Za Denghel at the battle of Bartcho, he ordered him to be brought at noon-day before the gate of his

his palace, and his head to be there ſtruck off with an ax, as a juſt atonement for violated majeſty.

The king, now retired to Coga, gave his whole attention to regulate thoſe abuſes, and repair thoſe loſſes, which this long and bloody war had occaſioned. He had two brothers by the mother's ſide, men of great merit, Sela Chriſtos, and Emana Chriſtos, deſtined to ſhare the principal part in the king's confidence and councils.

Bela Christos, a man of great family, who had been attached to him ſince he formed his firſt pretenſions to the crown, was called to court to take his ſhare in the glory and dangers of this reign, which it was eaſy to ſee would be a very active one; for every province around was full of rebels and independents, who had ſhaken off the yoke of government, paid no taxes, nor ſhewed other reſpect to the king than juſt what at the moment conſiſted with their own intereſt or inclination.

The Portugueſe ſoldiers, remnants of the army which came into Abyſſinia under Chriſtopher de Gama, had multiplied exceedingly, and their children had been trained by their parents in the uſe of fire-arms. They were at this time incorporated in one body under John Gabriel a veteran officer, who ſeems to have conſtantly remained with the king, while his ſoldiers (at leaſt great part of them) had followed the fortune they thought moſt likely to prevail ever ſince the time of Claudius.

Menas did not eſteem them enough to keep them in his army at the expence of enduring the ſeditious converſations

of

of their prieſts reviling and undervaluing his religion and government. He therefore baniſhed them the kingdom; but, inſtead of obeying, they joined the Baharnagaſh, then confederated with the Turks and in rebellion againſt his ſovereign, as we have already mentioned. Sertza Denghel ſeems to have ſcarcely ſet any value upon them after this, and made very little uſe of them during his long reign. Upon the infant Jacob's being put upon the throne they all adhered to him; and, after Jacob's baniſhment, part of them had attached themſelves to Za Denghel, and behaved with great ſpirit in the battle of Bartcho.

Upon Jacob's reſtoration they had joined him, and with him were defeated at the deciſive battle of Lebart, being all united againſt Socinios; ſo that, on whatever ſide they declared themſelves, they were conſtantly beaten by the cowardice of the Abyſſinians with whom they were joined. Yet, tho' they had been ſo often on the ſide that was unfortunate, their particular loſs had been always inconſiderable; becauſe, whatever was the fate of the reſt of the army, none of the country troops would ever ſtand before them, and they made their retreat from amidſt a routed army in nearly the ſame ſafety as if they had been conquerors; becauſe it was not, for ſeveral reaſons, the intereſt of the conquerors to attack them, nor was the experiment ever likely to be an eligible one to the aſſailants.

Socinios followed a conduct oppoſite to that of Menas. He determined to attach the Portugueſe wholly to himſelf, and to make them depend upon him entirely. For this reaſon he made great advances to their prieſts, and ſent for Peter Paez to court, where, after the uſual diſputes upon the

pope's ſupremacy, and the two natures in Chriſt, maſs was ſaid, and a ſermon preached, much with the ſame ſucceſs as it had been in the time of Za Denghel, and with full as great offence to the Abyſſinian clergy.

The province of Dembea, lying round the lake Tzana, is the moſt fertile and the moſt cultivated country in Abyſſinia. It is entirely flat, and ſeems to have been produced by the decreaſe of water in the lake, which, from very viſible marks, appears to have formerly been of four times the extent of what it is at preſent. Dembea, however fruitful, has one inconvenience to which all level countries in this climate are ſubject: A mortal fever rages in the whole extent of it, from March to Heder Michael, the eighth day of November, when there are always gentle ſhowers. This dangerous fever ſtops immediately upon the falling of theſe rains, as ſuddenly as the plague does upon the firſt falling of the nucta, or dew, in Egypt.

On the ſouth ſide of this lake the country riſes into a rocky promontory, which forms a peninſula and runs far into the lake. Nothing can be more beautiful than this ſmall territory, elevated, but not to an inconvenient height, above the water which ſurrounds it on all ſides, except the ſouth. The climate is delightful, and no fevers or other diſeaſes rage here. The proſpect of the lake and diſtant mountains is magnificent beyond European conception, and Nature ſeems to have pointed this place out for pleaſure, health, and retirement. Paez had aſked and obtained this territory from the king, who, he ſays, gave him a grant of it in perpetuity. The manner of this he deſcribes: "A civil officer is ſent on the part of the king, who calls together

all the proprietors of the neighbouring lands, and viſits the bounds with them; they kill a goat at particular diſtances, and bury the heads under ground upon the boundary line of this regality; which heads, Paez ſays, it is felony to dig up or remove; and this is a mark or gift of land in perpetuity."

Without contradicting the form of burying the goats heads, I ſhall only ſay, I never ſaw or heard of it, nor is there ſuch a thing as a gift of land in *perpetuum* known in Abyſſinia. All the land is the king's; he gives it to whom he pleaſes during pleaſure, and reſumes it when it is his will. As ſoon as he dies the whole land in the kingdom (that of the Abuna excepted) is in the diſpoſal of the crown; and not only ſo, but, by the death of every preſent owner, his poſſeſſions, however long enjoyed, revert to the king, and do not fall to the eldeſt ſon. It is by proclamation the poſſeſſion and property is reconveyed to the heir, who thereby becomes abſolute maſter of the land for his own life or pleaſure of the king, under obligation of military and other ſervices; and that exception, on the part of the Abuna, is not in reſpect to the ſanctity of his perſon, or charge, but becauſe it is founded upon treaty*, and is become part of the conſtitution.

The Abyſſinians ſaw, with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, the erection of a convent ſtrongly built with ſtone and lime, of which before they had no knowledge, and their wonder was ſtill increaſed, when, at deſire of the king, Paez undertook

* We have mentioned this treaty in the reign of Icon Amlac.

took, of the ſame materials, to build a palace for him at the ſouthmoſt end of this peninſula, which is called Gorgora. It was with amazement mixed with terror that they ſaw a houſe riſe upon houſe, for ſo they call the different ſtoreys.

Paez here diſplayed his whole ingenuity, and the extent of his abilities. He alone was architect, maſon, ſmith, and carpenter, and with equal dexterity managed all the inſtruments uſed by each profeſſion in the ſeveral ſtages of the work. The palace was what we ſhall call wainſcoted with cedar, divided into ſtate-rooms, and private apartments likewiſe for the queen and nobility of both ſexes that formed the court, with accommodations and lodgings for guards and ſervants.

As the king had at that time a view to attack the rebels, the Agows and Damots, and to check the inroads of the Galla into Gojam, he ſaw with pleaſure a work going on that provided the moſt commodious reſidence where his occupation in all probability was chiefly to lie. His principal aim was to bring into his kingdom a number of Portugueſe troops, which, joined to thoſe already there, and the converts he propoſed to make after embracing the Catholic religion, might enable him to extirpate that rebellious ſpirit which ſeemed now univerſally to have taken poſſeſſion of the hearts of his ſubjects, and eſpecially of the clergy, of late taught, he did not ſeem to know how, that moſt dangerous privilege of curſing and excommunicating kings. He had not ſeen in Peter Paez and his fellow-prieſts any thing but ſubmiſſion, and a love of monarchy; their lives and manners were truly apoſtolical; and he never thought, till he came afterwards to be convinced upon proof, that

the patriarch from Rome, and the Abuna from Cairo, tho' they differed in their opinion as to the two natures in Chriſt, did both heartily agree in the deſire of erecting eccleſiaſtical dominion and tyranny upon the ruins of monarchy and civil power, and of effecting a total ſubordination of the civil government, either to the chairs of St Mark or St Peter.

In the winter, during the ceſſation from work, Socinios called Paez from Gorgora to Coga, where he enlarged the territory the Jeſuits then had at Fremona. After which he declared to him his reſolution to embrace the Catholic religion; and, as Paez ſays, preſented him with two letters, one to the king of Portugal, the other to the pope: the firſt dated the 10th of December 1607, the latter the 14th of October of the ſame year. Theſe letters ſay not a word of his intended converſion, nor of ſubmiſſion to the ſee of Rome; but complain only of the diſorderly ſtate of his kingdom, and the conſtant inroads of the Galla, earneſtly requeſting a number of Portugueſe ſoldiers to free them from their yoke, as formerly, under the conduct of Chriſtopher de Gama, they had delivered Abyſſinia from that of the Moors.

While theſe things paſſed at Coga, two pieces of intelligence were brought to the king, both very material in themſelves, but which affected him very differently. The firſt was, that the traitor Za Selaſſé, while making one of his incurſions into Gojam, had fallen into an ambuſh laid for him by the Toluma Galla, guardians of that province on the banks of the Nile, and that theſe Pagans had ſlain him and cut off his head, which they then preſented to the

king, who ordered it to be expoſed on the lance whereon it was fixed, in the moſt conſpicuous place in the front of his palace.

This was the end of Ras Za Selaſſé, a name held in deteſtation to this day throughout all Abyſſinia. Though his death was juſt ſuch as it ought to have been, yet, as it was in an advanced time of life, he ſtill became a hurtful example, by ſhewing that it was poſſible for a man to live to old age in the continual practice of murder and treaſon.

He was of low birth, as I have already obſerved, of a Pagan nation of Troglodytes, of the loweſt eſteem in Abyſſinia, employed always in the meaneſt and moſt ſervile occupations, in which capacity he ſerved firſt in a private family. Being obſerved to have an active, quick turn of mind, he was preferred to the ſervice of Melec Segued, upon whoſe death he was ſo much eſteemed by his ſon Jacob, for the expertneſs and capacity he ſhewed in buſineſs, that he gave him large poſſeſſions, and appointed him afterwards to ſeveral ranks in the army; having regularly advanced through the ſubordinate degrees of military command, always with great ſucceſs, he was made at laſt general; and being now of importance ſufficient to be able to ruin his benefactor, he joined Ras Athanaſius, who had rebelled againſt Jacob, by whom he was taken priſoner, and, being mercifully dealt with, only baniſhed to Narea. From this diſgraceful ſituation he was freed by Za Denghel, who conferred upon him the moſt lucrative important employment in the ſtate. In return, he rebelled againſt Za Denghel; and at Bartcho deprived him of his kingdom and life. Upon Jacob's acceſſion he was appointed Betwudet, the firſt

place

place in Ethiopia, after the king, and governor of Gojam, one of the largeſt and richeſt provinces in Abyſſinia. But he ſoon after again forſook Jacob, ſwore allegiance to Socinios, and joined him.

Not content with all this, he began to form ſome new deſigns while with the court at Coga; and, having ſaid to ſome of the king's ſervants, over wine, that it was propheſied to him he ſhould kill three kings, which he had verified in two, and was waiting for the third, this ſpeech was repeated to Socinios, who ordered Za Selaſſè to be apprehended; and, though he moſt juſtly deſerved death, the king mercifully commuted his puniſhment to baniſhment to the top of Oureé Amba, which ſignifies the Great Mountain upon the high ridge, called *Guſman*, near the banks of the Nile; and, though cloſe confined in the caves on the top of that mountain, after a year's impriſonment he eſcaped to Walaka, and there declared himſelf captain of a band of robbers, with which he infeſted the province of Gojam, when he was ſlain by a peaſant, and his head cut off and ſent to Socinios, who very much rejoiced in the preſent, and diſpoſed of it as we have mentioned.

The ſecond piece of intelligence the emperor received was that in the mountains of Habab, contiguous to Maſuah, where is the famous monaſtery of the monks of St Euſtathius, called *Biſan;* a perſon appeared calling himſelf Jacob, ſon of Sertza Denghel, and pretending to have eſcaped from the battle of Lebart; thus, taking advantage of the circumſtance of Jacob's body not having been found in the field among the dead after that engagement, he pretended he had been ſo grievouſly wounded in the teeth and face that it was not

not poſſible to ſuffer the deformity to appear; for which reaſon, as he ſaid, but, as it appeared afterwards, to conceal the little reſemblance he bore to Jacob, he wrapped about his head the corner of his upper cloth, and ſo concealed one ſide of his face entirely.

All Tigrè haſtened to join this impoſtor as their true ſovereign; who, finding himſelf now at the head of an army, came down from the mountains of Biſan, and encamped in the neighbourhood of Dobarwa upon the Mareb, where he had a new acceſſion of ſtrength.

The ſhape of the crown in Abyſſinia is that of the hood, or capa, which the prieſts wear when ſaying maſs. It is compoſed of ſilver, ſometimes of gold, ſometimes of both metals, mixed and lined with blue ſilk. It is made to cover part of the forehead, both cheeks, and the hind-part of the neck likewiſe to the joining of the ſhoulders. A crown of this ſhape could not but be of great ſervice in hiding the terrible ſcars with which the impoſtor's face was ſuppoſed to be deformed. He had accordingly got one made at Maſuah, beat very thin out of a few ounces of gold which he had taken from a caravan that he had robbed. He wore it conſtantly upon his head as a token that he was not a candidate for the crown, but real ſovereign, who had worn that mark of power from his infancy.

The news of this impoſtor, with the uſual exaggeration of followers, ſoon came to Sela Chriſtos, governor of Tigré, who, ſeeing that the affair became more ſerious every day, reſolved to attempt to check it. He conceived, however, he had little truſt to put in the troops of his province, who all

of them were wavering whether they ſhould not join the rebel. His ſole dependence, then, was upon the troops of his own houſehold, veteran ſoldiers, well paid and cloathed, and firmly attached to his perſon, and likewiſe upon the Portugueſe. Above all, being himſelf a man of conſummate courage and prudence, he was far from judging of the power of his enemy by the multitude of rabble which compoſed it.

As ſoon as the armies came in preſence of each other, Jacob offered the governor battle. But no ſooner did the impoſtor's troops ſee the eagerneſs with which the ſmall but choſen band ruſhed upon them, than they fled and diſperſed; and though Sela Chriſtos had taken every precaution to cut off the pretended Jacob from his uſual ſculking places, it was not poſſible to overtake or apprehend him; for he arrived in ſafety in one of the higheſt and moſt inacceſſible mountains of the diſtrict, whence he looked down on Sela Chriſtos and his army without apprehenſion, having behind him a retreat to the more diſtant and leſs known mountains of Hamazen, ſhould his enemies preſs him further.

As long as Sela Chriſtos remained with his little army in that country, the impoſtor Jacob continued on the higheſt part of the mountains, accompanied only by two or three of his moſt intimate friends, who being people whoſe families dwelt in the plain below, brought him conſtant intelligence of what paſſed there.

Sela Christos, wiſhing by all means to engage the enemy, marched into a conſiderable plain called *Mai-aquel;* but, ſeeing on every ſide the top of each mountain guarded by troops

troops of ſoldiers, he was afraid he had advanced too far; and, apprehenſive leſt he ſhould be incloſed in the midſt of a multitude ſo poſted, he began to think how he could beſt make his retreat before he was ſurrounded by ſo numerous enemies. But they no ſooner ſaw his intention by the movement of his army, than, leaving their leader as a ſpectator above, they fell on all ſides upon Sela Chriſtos's troops, who, having no longer any ſafety but in their arms, began to attack the hill that was next them, which they ſtormed as they would do a caſtle. Finding the ſmall reſiſtance that each of theſe poſts made, the governor divided his ſmall army into ſo many ſeparate bodies, leaving his cavalry in the plain below, who, without fighting, were only employed in ſlaughtering thoſe his troops had diſlodged from their ſeparate poſts.

The day after, the impoſtor aſſembling his ſcattered troops, retreated towards the ſea into the territory of Hamazen, between the country of the Baharnagaſh and the mountains of the Habab.

Sela Christos, finding that, while he purſued his victory in theſe diſtant parts, the ſpirit of rebellion increaſed nearer home, reſolved to inform the king his brother of the unpromiſing ſtate of his affairs in Tigrè, and the great neceſſity there was of his preſence there. Nor did Socinios loſe a moment after receiving this intelligence from Sela Chriſtos, although it had found him, in one reſpect, very ill prepared for ſuch an undertaking; for he had ſent all his horſe from Coga upon an expedition againſt the Shangalla and Gongas, nations on the north-weſt border of this kingdom; ſo that, when he marched from Wainadega, his ca-

valry amounted to 530 men only, beſides a ſmall reinforcement brought by Emana Chriſtos, governor of Amhara.

It was at Aibo the king turned off the road to Tigrè towards Begemder, and that day encamped at Wainadega. From Wainadega he advanced to Davada; and, croſſing the Reb, he turned off by the way of Zang, and encamped at Kattamè. He then proceeded to Tzamè, and arrived at Hader. At this place ſome ſpies informed him that an advanced party of the Galla Marawa were ſtrongly lodged in a hill not far off. Upon receiving this notice, Socinios ordered his army to refreſh themſelves, to extinguiſh all lights, and march with as little noiſe as poſſible.

While it was ſcarce dawn of day, a ſtrong detachment of the king's army ſurrounded the hill where the Galla were, and found there a ſmall number of theſe ſavages placed like piquets to give the alarm and prevent ſurpriſe. Eleven Galla were ſlain, and their heads cut off and carried to the king, the firſt fruits of his expedition.

Resolving to profit by this early advantage, Socinios followed with all diligence, and came in ſight of the army of the enemy, without their having taken the ſmalleſt alarm. They were lying cloſely and ſecurely in their huts that they had made. A large ravine full of trees and ſtumps divided the two armies, and in part concealed them from each other. The king ordered Emana Chriſtos, and Abeton Welleta Chriſtos, to paſs the ravine with the horſe, and fall upon the Galla ſuddenly, throwing the heads of thoſe of the advanced guard they had cut off on the ground towards them.

Before

Before the king's horſe had paſſed the ravine, the Galla were alarmed, and mounted on horſeback. As they never fight in order, it required no time to form; but they received the king's cavalry ſo rudely, that, though Emana Chriſtos and the young prince behaved with the utmoſt courage, they were beat back, and obliged to fly with conſiderable loſs, being entangled in the buſhes. No ſooner did the king obſerve that his horſe were engaged, than he ordered his troops to paſs the ravine to ſupport them, and was deſirous to bring on a general engagement. But a panic had ſeized his troops. They would not ſtir, but ſeemed benumbed and overcome by the cold of the morning, ſpectators of the ruin of the cavalry.

Emana Chriſtos, and thoſe of the cavalry that had eſcaped the maſſacre, had repaſſed the ravine, and diſperſed themſelves in the front of the foot; while the victorious Marawa, like ignorant ſavages, puſhed their victory to the very front of the king's line. Socinios, ordering all the drums of the army to beat and trumpets to ſound, to excite ſome ſpirit in his troops, advanced himſelf before any of his ſoldiers, and ſlew the firſt Galla within his reach with his own hands. The example and danger the king expoſed himſelf to, raiſed the indignation of the troops. They poured in crowds, without regarding order, upon the Marawa, great part of whom had already paſſed the ravine, and all that had paſſed it were cut to pieces.

The Galla, unable to ſtand this loſs, fled from the field, and immediately after left Begemder. The want of horſe on the king's part ſaved their whole army from the deſtruction which would infallibly have been the conſequence of

a vigorous purſuit, through a country where every inhabitant was an enemy. The king after this returned to his palace at Coga to finiſh the buſineſs he had in hand.

In the mean time, a report was ſpread through all Tigrè, that the king had been defeated by the Galla, and that Ras Sela Chriſtos had repaired to Gondar in conſequence of that diſaſter. The impoſtor Jacob loſt no time in taking advantage of this report. He deſcended from his natural fortreſs, and, in conjunction with the governor of Axum, ſlew ſeveral people, and committed many ravages in Sirè. The Ras no ſooner learned that he was encamped on plain ground, than he preſented himſelf with the little army he had before; and, though the odds againſt him were exceſſive, yet by his preſence and conduct, the rebels, though they fought this time with more than ordinary obſtinacy, were defeated with great loſs, and their leader, the ſuppoſed Jacob, forced again to his inacceſſible mountains.

Socinios having now finiſhed the affairs which detained him at Coga, and being informed that the ſouthern Galla, reſenting the defeat of the Marawa, had entered into a league to invade Abyſſinia with united forces, and a complete army to burn and lay waſte the whole country between the Tacazzé and Tzana, and to attack the emperor in his capital of Coga, which they were determined to deſtroy, ſent orders to Kaſmati Julius, his ſon-in-law, to join him immediately with what forces he had, as alſo to Kefla Chriſtos; and, being joined by both theſe officers and their troops, he marched and took poſt at Ebenaat in the diſtrict of Beleſſen, in the way by which the Galla intended to paſs to the capital, and he reſolved to await them there.

The Galla advanced in their uſual manner, burning and deſtroying churches and villages, and murdering without mercy all that were ſo unfortunate as to fall into their hands. The king bore theſe exceſſes of his enemy with the patience of a good general, who ſaw they contributed to his advantage. He therefore did not offer to check any of their diſorders, but by not reſiſting rather hoped to encourage them. He had an army in number ſuperior, and this was ſeldom the caſe; but in quality there was no compariſon, five of the king's troops being equal to twenty of the enemy, and this was the general proportion in which they fought. He, therefore, contented himſelf with chooſing proper ground to engage, and improving it by ambuſhes ſuch as the nature of the field permitted or ſuggeſted.

It was the 7th of January 1608, early in the morning, that the Galla preſented themſelves to Socinios in battle, in a plain below Ebenaat, ſurrounded with ſmall hills covered with wood. The Galla filled the whole plain, as if voluntarily devoting themſelves to deſtruction, and from the hills and buſhes were deſtroyed by fire-arms from enemies they did not ſee, who with a ſtrong body took poſſeſſion of the place through which they entered, and by which they were to return no more.

Socinios that day, for what particular reaſon does not appear, diſtinguiſhed himſelf among the midſt of the Galla, by fighting like a common ſoldier. It is thought by the hiſtorians of thoſe times, that he had received advice while at Coga, that his ſon-in-law Julius intended to rebel, and therefore he meant to diſcourage him by compariſon of their perſonal abilities. This, however, is not probable; the king's

king's character was eſtabliſhed, and nothing more could be added to it. However that may be, all turned to the diſadvantage of the Galla. No general or other officer thought himſelf entitled to ſpare his perſon more than the king; all fought like common ſoldiers; and, being the men beſt armed and mounted, and moſt experienced in the field, they contributed in proportion to the ſlaughter of the day. About 12,000 men on the part of the Galla were killed upon the ſpot; the very few that remained were deſtroyed by the peaſants, whilſt 400 men only fell on the part of the king, ſo it was a maſſacre rather than a battle.

Socinios now reſolved to try his fortune againſt the impoſtor Jacob, and with that reſolution he croſſed Lamalmon, deſcending to the Tacazzè in his way to Sirè. Here, as on the frontiers of his province, he was met by Sela Chriſtos, who brought Peter Paez along with them. Both were kindly received by the king, who encamped in the large plain before Axum, in conſequence of a reſolution he had long taken of being crowned with all the ancient ceremonies uſed on this occaſion by former kings, while the royal reſidence was in the province of Tigrè.

It was on the 18th of March, according to their account, the day of our Saviour's firſt coming to Jeruſalem, that this feſtival began. His army conſiſted of about 30,000 men. All the great officers, all the officers of ſtate, and the court then preſent, were every man dreſſed in the richeſt and gayeſt manner. Nor was the other ſex behind-hand in the ſplendour of their appearance. The king, dreſſed in crimſon damaſk, with a great chain of gold round his neck, his head bare, mounted upon a horſe richly capariſoned, advanced

at the head of his nobility, paſſed the outer court, and came to the paved way before the church. Here he was met by a number of young girls, daughters of the umbares, or ſupreme judges, together with many noble virgins ſtanding on the right and left of the court.

Two of the nobleſt of theſe held in their hands a crimſon cord of ſilk, ſomewhat thicker than common whip-cord, but of a looſer texture, ſtretched acroſs from one company to another, as if to ſhut up the road by which the king was approaching the church. When this cord was prepared and drawn tight about breaſt-high by the girls, the king entered, advancing at a moderate pace, curvetting and ſhewing the management of his horſe. He was ſtopped by the tenſion of this ſtring, while the damſels on each ſide aſking who he was, were anſwered, "I am your king, the king of "Ethiopia." To which they replied with one voice, "You "ſhall not paſs; you are not our king."

The king then retires ſome paces, and then preſents himſelf as to paſs, and the cord is again drawn acroſs his way by the young women ſo as to prevent him, and the queſtion repeated, "Who are you?" The king anſwered, "I am your "king, the king of Iſrael." But the damſels reſolved, even on this ſecond attack, not to ſurrender but upon their own terms; they again anſwer, "You ſhall not paſs; you are not "our king."

The third time, after retiring, the king advances with a pace and air more determined; and the cruel virgins, again preſenting the cord and aſking who he is, he anſwers, "I am your king, the king of Sion;" and, drawing his

his ſword, cuts the ſilk cord aſunder. Immediately upon this the young women cry, "It is a truth, you are our king; "truly you are the king of Sion." Upon which they begin to ſing Hallelujah, and in this they are joined by the court and army upon the plain; fire-arms are diſcharged, drums and trumpets ſound; and the king, amidſt theſe acclamations and rejoicings, advances to the foot of the ſtair of the church, where he diſmounts, and there ſits down upon a ſtone, which, by its remains, apparently was an altar of Anubis, or the dog-ſtar: At his feet there is a large ſlab of free-ſtone, on which is the inſcription mentioned by Poncet, and which ſhall be quoted hereafter, when I come to ſpeak of the ruins of Axum.

After the king comes the nebrit, or keeper of the book of the law in Axum, ſuppoſed to repreſent Azarias the ſon of Zadock; then the twelve umbares, or ſupreme judges, who with Azarias accompanied Menilek, the ſon of Solomon, when he brought the book of the law from Jeruſalem, and theſe are ſuppoſed to repreſent the twelve tribes. After theſe follow the Abuna at the head of the prieſts, and the Itcheguè at the head of the monks; then the court, who all paſs through the aperture made by the diviſion of the ſilk cord, which remains ſtill upon the ground.

The king is firſt anointed, then crowned, and is accompanied half up the ſteps by the ſinging prieſts, called Depteras, chanting pſalms and hymns. Here he ſtops at a hole made for the purpoſe in one of the ſteps, and is there fumigated with incenſe and myrrh, aloes and caſſia. Divine ſervice is then celebrated; and, after receiving the ſacrament, he returns to the camp, where fourteen days ſhould regularly

larly be ſpent in feaſting, and all manner of rejoicing and military exerciſe.

The king is, by the old cuſtom, obliged to give a number of preſents, the particulars of which are ſtated in the deftar, or treaſury-book, the value, the perſon to whom they are due, and the time of giving; but a great part of theſe are gone into deſuetude ſince the removal of the court from Tigrè, as alſo many of the offices are now ſuppreſſed, and with them the preſents due to them.

The nobles and the court were likewiſe obliged to give preſents to the king upon that occaſion. The preſent from the governor of Axum is two lions and a fillet of ſilk, upon which is wrote, "*Mo Anbaſa am Nizilet Solomon am Negadê* "*Jude*—The lion of the tribe of Judah and race of Solomon "hath overcome;" this ſerves as a form of inveſtiture of lands that the king grants, a ribband bearing this inſcription being tied round the head of the perſon to whom the lands are given.

This governor was then in rebellion, ſo did not aſſiſt at the ceremony. Notwithſtanding the difference of expence which I have mentioned, by ſuppreſſing places, preſents, and dues, the king Tecla Haimanout told me at Gondar, that when he was in Tigrè, driven there by the late rebellion, Ras Michael had ſome thoughts of having him crowned there in contempt of his enemies; but, by the moſt moderate calculation that could be made, not to turn the ceremony into ridicule by parſimony, it would have coſt 20,000 ounces of gold, or L. 50,000 Sterling; upon which he laid aſide the thoughts of it, ſaying to the king, "Sir,

truſt to me, 20,000 ounces of Tigrè iron ſhall crown you better; if more is wanted, I will beſtow it upon your enemies with pleaſure till they are ſatisfied;" meaning the iron balls with which his ſoldiers loaded their muſquets.

After the coronation was over, the king paſſed the Mareb, deſiring to finiſh his campaign by the death of his competitor Jacob; but that impoſtor knew too well the ſuperiority of his rival, and hid himſelf in the inmoſt receſſes, without other attendants than a few goats, who furniſhed him with their milk, as well as their ſociety.

Socinios left the affair of the rebel Jacob to be ended by Amſala Chriſtos, an officer of great prudence, whom he made governor of Tigré; and, taking his brother Ras Sela Chriſtos along with him, returned to Coga*. Amſala Chriſtos being ſeized with a grievous ſickneſs, ſaw how vain it was for him to purſue the ſuppreſſion of a rebellion conducted by ſuch a head as this impoſtor Jacob, and therefore ſecretly applied to two young men, Zara Johannes and Amha Georgis, brothers, and ſons of the Shum Welled Georgis, who had committed murder, and were outlawed by Socinios, and, keeping hid in the mountains, had joined in fellowſhip with the impoſtor Jacob.

These, gained by the promiſe of pardon given them by Amſala Chriſtos, choſe an opportunity which their intimacy gave them, and, falling upon Jacob unawares in his retirement,

* Then the metropolis upon the Lake Tzana.

ment, they ſlew him, cut his head off, and ſent it to the king at Coga, who received it very thankfully, and returned it to Tigrè to Amſala Chriſtos, to be expoſed publicly in all the province to undeceive the people; for it now appeared, that he had neither ſcars in his face, broken jaw, nor loſs of teeth, but that the covering was intended only to conceal the little reſemblance he bore to king Jacob, ſlain, as we have ſeen, at the battle of Lebart; and he was now found to have been a herdſman, in thoſe very mountains of Biſan to which he had ſo often fled for refuge while his rebellion laſted.

The king, in his return from Tigrè, paſſing by Fremona, ſent to the Jeſuits there thirty ounces of gold, about L. 75 Sterling, for their immediate exigency; teſtifying, in the moſt gracious manner, his regret, "That the many affairs in which he was engaged had prevented him from hearing maſs in their convent, as he very ſincerely wiſhed to do; but he left with them the Abuna Simon, to whom he had recommended to ſtudy their religion, and be a friend to it."

In this he ſhewed his want of penetration and experience; for though he had ſeen wars between ſoldier and ſoldier, who, after having been in the moſt violent ſtate of enmity, had died in defence of each other as friends, he was not aware of that degree of enmity which reigns upon difference of opinion, not to ſay religion, between prieſt and prieſt. It was not long, however, before he ſaw it, and the example was in the perſon of his preſent friend the Abuna Simon.

While Socinios was yet in Tigré, news were brought to Coga from Woggora to Sanuda Tzef Leham * of Dembea, who could not accompany the king to Tigré on account of ſickneſs, but was left with the charge of the capital and palace during the king's abſence, that Melchizedec, one of the meaneſt and loweſt ſervants of the late king Melec Segued, had rebelled, and was collecting troops, conſiſting of ſoldiers, ſervants, and dependents of that prince, and had ſlain ſome of Socinios's ſervants. Sanuda was a brave and active officer; but, being without troops, (the king having carried the whole army to Tigrè) immediately ſet out from Maitſha to the town of Tchelga, one of the frontiers of Abyſſinia, poſſeſſed by Wed Ageeb prince of the Arabs.

It is here to be obſerved, that though the territorial right of Tchelga did then, and does ſtill appertain to the kingdom of Abyſſinia, yet the poſſeſſion of it is ceded by agreement to Wed Ageeb, under whoſe protection the caravans from Egypt and Sennaar, and thoſe from Abyſſinia to Sennaar and Egypt, were underſtood to be ever ſince they were cut off in the laſt century by the baſha of Suakem, for this purpoſe, that a cuſtomhouſe might be erected, and the duties divided between the two kingdoms equally. The ſame is the caſe with Serké, a town belonging to Sennaar, ceded for the ſame purpoſe to the king of Abyſſinia.

It happened that Abdelcader †, ſon of Ounfa, late king of Sennaar, or of Funge, as he is called in the Abyſſinian annals, had been depoſed by his ſubjects in the 4th year of his

* Regiſter of the cattle; ſo the governor of Dembea is called.

† See the Hiſtory of the riſe of this monarchy in my return through Sennaar.

his reign, and remained at Tchelga under the mutual protection of Wed Ageeb and the emperor of Abyſſinia, a kind of priſoner to them both; and had brought with him a number of ſoldiers and dependents, the partakers of his former good fortune, who, finding ſafety and good uſage at Tchelga, were naturally well-affected to the king. Theſe, ready mounted and armed, joined Sanuda immediately upon his declaring the exigency; and with theſe he marched ſtraight to Coga, to the defence of the palace with which he had been intruſted.

Melchizedec, whoſe deſign was againſt Coga, no ſooner heard Sanuda was arrived there than he marched to ſurpriſe him, and a very bloody and obſtinate engagement followed. The Funge, piqued in honour to render this ſervice to their protector, fought ſo obſtinately that they were all ſlain, and Sanuda, mounted that day upon a fleet horſe belonging to Socinios, eſcaped with difficulty, much wounded.

As ſoon as Socinios heard of this misfortune, he ſent Ras Emana Chriſtos, who marched ſtraight to Woggora, creating Zenobius, ſon of Imael, governor of that diſtrict; and there he found Sanuda Zenobius and Ligaba Za Denghel together, in a place called Deberaſſo.

As ſoon as the rebel Melchizedec heard Emana Chriſtos was come, and with him the fore-mentioned noblemen, he ſet himſelf to exert the utmoſt of his power to draw together forces of all kinds from every part he could get them, and his army was ſoon increaſed to ſuch a degree as,

notwithſtanding the preſence of Emana Chriſtos, to ſtrike terror into all the territory and towns of Dembea. Nothing was wanted but a king of the royal race for whom to fight. Without a chief of this kind, it was evident that the army, however often ſucceſsful, would at laſt diſperſe. They, therefore, brought one Arzo, a prince of the royal blood, from his hiding-place in Begemder. Arzo, in return for a throne, conferred the place of Ras upon Melchizedec. Za Chriſtos, ſon of Hatzir Abib, was appointed to the command of the army under him; and, having finiſhed this and many ſuch neceſſary preparatives, they marched ſtraight to meet Emana Chriſtos, with a better countenance than rebel armies generally bear.

It was the 9th of March 1611, at 9 in the morning, when the two armies were firſt in ſight of each other, nor did they long delay coming to an engagement. The battle was very obſtinate and bloody; Melchizedec re-eſtabliſhed his character for worth, at leaſt as a ſoldier; the ſame did Za Chriſtos. Of the competitor Arzo, hiſtory makes no mention; his blood, probably, was too precious to riſk the ſpilling of it, being ſo far-fetched as from king Solomon. After a moſt obſtinate reſiſtance, part of Za Chriſtos's army was broken and put to flight; but it rallied ſo often, and ſold the ground it yielded ſo dear, that it gave time to Emana Chriſtos to come up to his army's aſſiſtance.

The Ras, who was as brave a ſoldier as he was a wiſe and prudent general, ſaw it was a time when all ſhould be riſked, and threw himſelf into the midſt of his enemies; and he was now arrived near the place where Melchizedec fought, when that rebel, ſeeing him advancing ſo faſt a-

mong his ſlaughtered followers, gueſſing his intention, declined the combat, turned his horſe and fled, while affairs even yet appeared in his favour. This panic of the general had the effect it ordinarily has in barbarous armies. Nobody conſidered how the proſpect of the general iſſue ſtood; they fled with Melchizedec, and loſt more men than would have ſecured them victory had they ſtood in their ranks.

A BODY of troops, joined by ſome peaſants of Begemder, purſued Melchizedec ſo cloſely that they came up with him and took him priſoner, together with Tenſa Chriſtos, a very active partizan, and enemy to Emana Chriſtos. Having brought them to the camp, before the Ras returned to Coga, they were tried and condemned to die for rebellion, as traitors, and the ſentence immediately executed, after which their heads were ſent to the king. Very ſoon after this, Arzo, and his general Za Chriſtos, were taken and ſent to the king, who ordered them to be tried by the judges in common form, and they underwent the ſame fate.

THE king was employed in the winter ſeaſon while he reſided at Coga, in building a new church, called St Gabriel. But the ſeaſon of taking the field being come, he marched out with his army and halted at Gogora, ſending Emana Chriſtos and Sela Chriſtos againſt the rebels; theſe were not in a particular clan, or province, for all the country was in rebellion, from the head of the Nile round, eaſtward, to the frontiers of Tigré. Part of them indeed were not in arms, but refuſed to pay their quota of the revenue; part of them were in arms, and would neither pay, nor admit a governor from the king among them; others willingly ſubmitted

mitted to Socinios, and were armed, only thereby to exempt themſelves from payment.

Sela Christos fell upon the inhabitants of the mountainous diſtrict of Guſman, on the Nile, whoſe principal ſtrong-hold, Oureé Amba, he forced, killing many, and carrying away their children as ſlaves, which, upon the interceſſion of Peter Paez, were given to the Jeſuits to be educated as Catholics.

The next attempt was upon the Gongas, a black Pagan nation, with which he had the ſame ſucceſs; the reſt were the Agows, a very numerous people, all confederates and in arms, and not willing to hear of any compoſition. The king ordered one of theſe tribes, the Zalabaſſa, to be extirpated as far as poſſible, and their country laid waſte. But notwithſtanding this example, which met with great interruption in the execution, the Agows continued in rebellion for ſeveral years afterwards, but much impoveriſhed and leſſened in number by variety of victories obtained over them.

The two next years were ſpent in unimportant ſkirmiſhes with the Agows of Damot, and with the Galla, invaders of Gojam. In 1615, the year after, Tecla Georgis made governor of Samen, and Welled Hawaryat, ſhum of Tſalemat*, were both ſent againſt a rebel who declared himſelf competitor for the crown. His name was Amdo. He pretended to be the late king Jacob, ſon of Melec Segued; and this character he gave himſelf, without the ſmalleſt communication

* A low territory at the foot of Lamalmon.

cation with the relations or connections of that prince. As ſoon as Aſſera Chriſtos and Tecla Garima, ſervants of Welled Hawaryat, heard of this adventurer, they ſurpriſed him in Tſalemat, and, putting him in irons, confined him in the houſe of Aſſera Chriſtos.

Gideon, king of the Jews, whoſe reſidence was on the high mountain of Samen, upon hearing that Amdo was priſoner, ſent a body of armed men who ſurpriſed Aſſera Chriſtos in his own houſe in the night, and killed him, bringing with them his priſoner Amdo to Samen, and delivered him to Gideon there; who not only took him into protection, but aſſiſted him in raiſing an army by every means in his power. There were not wanting there idle vagabonds and lawleſs people enough, who fled to the ſtandard of a prince whoſe ſole view ſeemed to be murder, robbery, and all ſort of licentiouſneſs. It was not long till Amdo, by the aſſiſtance of Gideon, found himſelf at the head of an army, ſtrong enough to leave the mountain, and try his fortune in the plain below, where he laid waſte Shawada, Tſalemat, and all the countries about Samen which perſevered in their duty to the king.

Socinios, upon this, appointed Julius his ſon-in-law governor of Woggora, Samen, Waag, and Abbergalé, that is, of all the low countries from the borders of the Tacazzè to Dembea. Abram, an old officer of the king, deſirous to ſtop the progreſs of the rebel, marched towards him, and offered him battle; but that brave officer had not the ſucceſs his intention deſerved, for he was defeated and ſlain; which had ſuch an effect upon Julius, that, without hazarding his fortune farther, he ſent to beſeech the king to march

againſt Amdo with all poſſible expedition, as his affairs were become deſperate in that part of his dominions.

The king hereupon marched ſtraight to Woggora, and joined Julius at Shimbra-Zuggan; thence he deſcended from Samen, and encamped upon Tocur-Ohha, (the black river) thence he proceeded to Debil, and then to Sobra; and from this laſt ſtation he ſent a detachment of his army to attack a ſtrong mountain called Meſſiraba, one of the natural fortreſſes of Gideon, which was forced by the king's troops after ſome reſiſtance, and the whole inhabitants, without diſtinction of age or ſex, put to the ſword, for ſuch were the orders of the king.

This firſt ſucceſs very much diſheartened the rebels, for Meſſiraba was, by nature, one of the ſtrongeſt mountains, and it, beſides, had been fortified by art, furniſhed with plenty of proviſions, and a number of good troops. The next mountain Socinios attacked was Hotchi, and the third Amba Za Hancaſſé, where he had the like ſucceſs, and treated the inhabitants in the ſame manner; thence he removed his army to Seganat, where he met with a very ſtout reſiſtance; but this mountain, too, was at laſt taken, Gideon himſelf eſcaping narrowly by the bravery of his principal general, who, fighting deſperately, was ſlain by a muſqueteer.

The conſtant ſucceſs of the king, and the bloody manner in which he purſued his victory, began to alarm Gideon, leſt the end ſhould be the extirpation of his whole nation. He, therefore, made an overture to the king, that, if he would pardon him and grant him peace, he would deliver the rebel Amdo bound into his hands.

The

THE king aſſented to this, and Amdo was accordingly delivered up; and, being convicted of rebellion and murder, he was ſentenced to be nailed to a croſs, and to remain there till he died. But the terrible cries and groans which he made while they were fixing him to the croſs, ſo much ſhocked the ears of the king, that he ordered him to be taken down, and his head ſtruck off with an ax, which was executed in the midſt of the camp.

SOCINIOS after this retired to Dancaz, and ordered Keſla governor of Gojam, and Jonael his maſter of the houſehold, to march ſuddenly and ſurpriſe Belaya, a country belonging to the Gongas and Guba, Pagan nations, on whom, every year, he made war for the ſake of taking ſlaves for the uſe of the palace. Theſe two officers, with a large body, moſtly horſe, fell unawares upon the ſavages at Belaya, ſlaying part, and bringing away their children. But not content with doing this, they likewiſe attacked the two diſtricts of Agows, Dengui and Sankara, then in peace with the king, and drove away an immenſe number of cattle, which the king no ſooner heard, than he ordered a ſtrict ſearch to be made, and the whole cattle belonging to the Agows to be gathered together, and reſtored to their reſpective owners; a piece of juſtice which ſoftened the hearts of this people more than all the ſeverities that had been hitherto uſed; and the good effects of which were ſoon after ſeen upon the Agows, though it produced ſomething very different in the conduct of Jonael.

THE king this year, 1616, left his capital at the uſual time, in the month of November, and ordered his whole houſehold to attend him. His intention was againſt the Galla on the

weſt of Gojam, eſpecially the tribe called Libo. But this campaign was rendered fruitleſs by the death of the king's eldeſt ſon, Kennaffer Chriſtos, a young prince of great hopes, eſteemed both by the king and the people. He had an excellent underſtanding, and the moſt affable manners poſſible, to thoſe even whom he did not like; was very fond of the ſoldiers; merciful, generous, and liberal; and was thought to be the favourite of the king his father, who buried him with great pomp in the church of Debra Roma, built by king Iſaac, in the lake Tzana.

In the midſt of this mourning, there came a very bloody order* from the king. Hiſtory barely tells us the fact, but does not aſſign any other reaſon than the wanton manner in which Gideon king of the Jews had endeavoured to diſturb his reign and kingdom, which was thought a ſufficient excuſe for it. However this may be, the king gave orders to Kaſmati Julius, Kaſmati Welled Hawaryat, Billetana Gueta Jonael, and Fit-Auraris Hoſannah, to extirpate all the Falaſha that were in Foggora, Janfakara, and Bagenarwè, to the borders of Samen; alſo all that were in Bagla, and in all the diſtricts under their command, wherever they could find them; and very few of them eſcaped, excepting ſome who fled with Phineas.

In this maſſacre, which was a very general one, and executed very ſuddenly, fell Gideon king of that people; a man of great reputation, not only among his ſubjects, but throughout all Abyſſinia, reputed alſo immenſely rich. His treaſures,

* It was probably part of the fruits of the new religion, and the work of his new religious adviſers.

ſures, ſuppoſed to be concealed in the mountains, are the objects of the ſearch of the Abyſſinians to this day.

The children of thoſe that were ſlain were ſold for ſlaves by the king; and all the Falaſha in Dembea, in the low countries immediately in the king's power, were ordered upon pain of death to renounce their religion, and be baptiſed. To this they conſented, ſeeing there was no remedy; and the king unwiſely imagined, that he had extinguiſhed, by one blow, the religion which was that of his country long before Chriſtianity, by the unwarrantable butchery of a number of people whom he had ſurpriſed living in ſecurity under the aſſurance of peace. Many of them were baptiſed accordingly, and they were all ordered to plow and harrow upon the ſabbath-day.

The king next ſent orders to Sela Chriſtos, and Keſla governor of Gojam, that, aſſembling their troops, they ſhould transfer the war into Bizamo, a province on the ſouth ſide of the Nile, called alſo in the books a kingdom. Through this lies the road of the merchants leading to Narea. It is inhabited by ſeveral clans of Pagans, which together make the great diviſion of theſe nations into Boren, and Bertuma Galla *.

The army paſſed the Nile, laying waſte the whole country, driving off the cattle, collecting the women and children as ſlaves, and putting all the men to the ſword; without theſe people, though they make conſtant inroads into

* The words, Boren, and Bertuma Galla, have no meaning in the Ethiopic.

Gojam, appearing anywhere in force to ſtop the deſolation of their country. The whole tract between Narea and the Nile was now cleared of enemies, and a number of prieſts at that time ſent to revive drooping Chriſtianity in thoſe parts.

In the year 1617, a league was again made among the Boren Galla, that part of them ſhould invade Gojam, while the others (namely the Marawa) ſhould enter Begemder. Upon hearing this, the king in haſte marched to Begemder, that he might be ready in caſe of need to aſſiſt Tigré. He then fixed his head-quarters at Shima, but from this he ſpeedily removed; and, paſſing Emfras, came to Dobit, a favourite reſidence of the emperor Jacob, where he held a council to determine which of the two provinces he ſhould firſt aſſiſt.

It was the general opinion of his officers, that to march at that time of the year into Tigré by Begemder, was to deſtroy the army, and diſtreſs both provinces; that an army, well provided with horſe, was neceſſary for acting with ſucceſs againſt the Galla, and that, in effect, though the royal army at preſent was ſo appointed, yet there was no graſs at that time of the year in all that march for the ſubſiſtence of the cavalry, and very little water for the uſe of man or beaſt, an inconvenience the Galla themſelves muſt experience if they attempted an invaſion that way. It was, moreover, urged, that, if the king ſhould march through Woggora and Lamalmon, they might get more food for their beaſts, and water too; but then they would throw themſelves far from the place where the Galla had entered, and would be obliged to fall into the former road, with the inconveniencies already ſtated. The conſequence of this deliberation

liberation was, that it was with very great regret the good of the commonweal obliged them to leave Tigré to the protection of Providence alone for a time, and haſten to meet the enemy that were then laying Gojam waſte.

With this view the king left Dobit, and came to the river Gomara in Foggora. He then paſſed the Nile near Dara, and came to Selalo, where he heard that the Djawi had paſſed the Nile from Bizamo, and entered Gojam at the oppoſite ſide to where he then was. He there left his baggage, and, by a forced march, advancing three days journey in one, he came to Bed, upon the river Sadi; but, inſtead of finding the enemy there, he received intelligence from Sela Chriſtos, that he had met the Galla immediately after their paſſing the Nile; had fought them, and cut their army to pieces, without allowing them time to ravage the country.

Upon this good news the king turned off on the road to Tchegal and Wainadaffa, and ordered Bela Chriſtos to aſſemble as great an army as he could, and fall upon the Djawi and Galla in Walaka and Shoa, as alſo Ras Sela Chriſtos, to paſs the Nile and join him there.

That general loſt no time, but marched ſtraight to Amca Ohha, or the river Amca, where he found the Edjow, who fled upon his coming, without giving him any opportunity of bringing them to an engagement, abandoning their wives, children, and ſubſtance, to the mercy of the enemy. Sela Chriſtos, having finiſhed this expedition as he intended, returned to join the king, whom he found encamped upon the river Suqua, near Debra Werk, guarding thoſe provinces in the abſence of Sela Chriſtos. From this

the king, retreating towards Dembea, paſſed the Nile near Dara, and encamped at Zinzenam, whence he marched round the lake into Dembea to his palace at Gorgora.

This village, whoſe name ſignifies *rain upon rain*, affords us a proof of what I have ſaid in ſpeaking of the cauſe of the overflowing of the Nile, in contradiction to the Adulitic inſcription, that no ſnow falls in Abyſſinia, or rather, that though ſnow may have fallen in the courſe of centuries, it is a phænomenon ſo rare as not to have a name or word to expreſs it in the whole language, and is entirely unknown to the people in general, at leaſt to the weſt of the Tacazzé.

The Abyſſinian hiſtorian, from whom theſe memoirs are compoſed, ſays, "That this village, called Zinzenam, has its name from an extraordinary circumſtance that once happened in theſe parts, for a ſhower of rain fell, which was not properly of the nature of rain, as it did not run upon the ground, but remained very light, having ſcarce the weight of feathers, of a beautiful white colour like flour; it fell in ſhowers, and occaſioned a darkneſs in the air more than rain, and liker to miſt. It covered the face of the whole country for ſeveral days, retaining its whiteneſs the whole time, then went away like dew, without leaving any ſmell or unwholeſome effect behind it.

This was certainly the accidental phænomenon of a day; for, notwithſtanding the height of the mountains Taranta and Lamalmon, ſnow never was ſeen there, at leaſt for ages paſt; and Laſta, in whoſe mountains armies have periſhed by cold, as far as a very particular inquiry could go, never yet had ſnow upon them; and Zinzenam is not in theſe mountains,

tains, or in any elevated ſituation. On the contrary, it is adjoining to the plain country of Foggora, near where it borders upon Begemder, not above 20 miles from the ſecond cataract, or 40 miles from Gondar; ſo that this muſt have been a ſhort and accidental change of the atmoſphere, of which there are examples of many different kinds, in the hiſtories of all countries.

As ſoon as the weather permitted, the king left his palace at Gorgora in the way to Tocuſſa, where he ſtaid ſeveral days; removed thence to Tenkel, where he continued alſo four days, and proceeded to Gunkè, where he halted. From his head-quarters at Gunkè, the king, meditating an expedition againſt Atbara, ſent a meſſenger to Nile Wed Ageeb, prince of the Arabs, deſiring a meeting with him before he attacked the Funge, for ſo they call the ſubjects of the new monarchy, lately eſtabliſhed at Sennaar by the conqueſt of the Arabs, under Wed Ageeb, a very conſiderable part of whoſe territory they had taken by force, and now enjoyed as their own poſſeſſions.

Abdelcader, ſon of Ounſa, was the ninth prince of the race of Funge then reigning; a weak, and ill-inclined man, but with whom Socinios had hitherto lived in friendſhip, and, in a late treaty, had ſent him as a preſent, a nagareet, or kettle-drum, richly ornamented with gold, with a gold chain to hang it by. Abdelcader, on his part, returned to Socinios a trained falcon, of an excellent kind, very much eſteemed among the Arabs.

Soon after this, Abdelcader was depoſed by his brother Adelan, ſon of Ounſa, and fled to Tchelga, under protection

of the king of Abyſſinia, who allowed him an honourable maintenance; a cuſtom always obſerved in ſuch caſes in the Eaſt, by princes towards their unfortunate neighbours.

Baady, ſon of Abdelcader, an active and violent young prince, although he depoſed his uncle Adelan, took this protection of his father in bad part. It was likewiſe ſuggeſted to him, that the preſent ſent by Socinios, a nagareet, or kettle-drum, imported, that Socinios conſidered him as his vaſſal, the drum being the ſign of inveſtiture ſent by the king to any one of his ſubjects whom he appoints to govern a province, and that the return of the falcon was likely to be conſidered as the acknowledgement of a vaſſal to his ſuperior. Baady, upon his acceſſion to the throne, was reſolved to rectify this too great reſpect ſhewn on the part of his father, by an affront he reſolved to offer. With this view, he ſent to Socinios two old, blind, and lame horſes.

Socinios took this amiſs, as it was intended he ſhould, and the ſlight was immediately followed by the troops of Atbara, under Nile Wed Ageeb, ſent by Baady to make an inroad into Abyſſinia, to lay waſte the country, and drive off the people, with orders to ſell them as ſlaves.

Among the moſt active in this expedition, were thoſe of the town of Serké. When Baady complained that his father and rival was protected in his own town of Tchelga, it had been anſwered, That true it was, Tchelga had been ceded and did belong to Sennaar, for every purpoſe of revenue, but that the ſovereignty of the place had never been alienated or ſurrendered to the king of Sennaar, but remained now, as ever, veſted in the king of Abyſſinia. Serkè ſtood preciſely

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in the ſame ſituation with reſpect to Abyſſinia, as Tchelga did to Sennaar, when Socinios demanded ſatisfaction for the violence committed againſt him by his own town of Serkè. The ſame anſwer was given him, That for all fiſcal purpoſes Serkè was his, but owed him no allegiance; for, being part of the kingdom of Sennaar, it was bound to aſſiſt its ſovereign in all wars againſt his enemies.

Socinios, deeply engaged in the troubles that attended the beginning of his reign, paſſed over for a time both the affront and injury, but ſent into Atbara to Nile Wed Ageeb, propoſing a treaty with him independent of the king of Sennaar.

There were, at this time, three ſorts of people that inhabited the whole country from lat. 13° (the mountains of Abyſſinia) to the tropic of Cancer (the frontiers of Egypt.) The firſt was the Funge, or negroes, eſtabliſhed in Atbara ſince the year 1504, by conqueſt. The ſecond, the old inhabitants of that country, known in very early ages by the name of *Shepherds*, which continues with them to this day; and theſe lived under a female government. The third, the Arabs, who came hither after the conqueſt of Egypt, in an army under Caled Ibn el Waalid, or Saif Ullah, *the Sword of God*, during the Khalifat of Omar, deſtined to ſubdue Nubia, and, ſtill later, in the time of Salidan and his brother.

These Arabs had aſſociated with the firſt inhabitants, the Shepherds, from a ſimilarity of life and manners, and, by treaty, the Funge had eſtabliſhed a tribute to be paid them from both; after which, theſe were to enjoy their former habitations without further moleſtation.

This prince of the Arabs, Nile Wed Ageeb, embraced the offer of the king of Abyſſinia very readily; and a treaty was accordingly made between Socinios and him, and a territory in Abyſſinia granted him on the frontiers, to which he could retire in ſafety, as often as his affairs were embroiled with the ſtate of Sennaar.

It happened ſoon after this, that Alico, a Mahometan, governor of the Mazaga for Socinios, that is, of Nara and Ras el Feel, a low country, as the name imports, of black earth, revolted from his maſter, and fled to Sennaar, carrying with him a number of the king's horſes. Socinios made his complaint to the king of Sennaar, who took no notice of it, neither returned any anſwer, which exaſperated Socinios ſo much that it produced the preſent expedition, and was a cauſe of much bloodſhed, and of a war which, at leaſt in intention, laſts to this day between the two kingdoms.

Wed Ageeb, upon Socinios's firſt ſummons, came to Gunkè, his head-quarters, attended by a number of troops, and ſome of the beſt horſe in Atbara. Upon his entering the king's tent, he proſtrated himſelf, (as is the Abyſſinian cuſtom) acknowledged himſelf the king's vaſſal, and brought preſents with him to a very conſiderable value. Socinios received him with great marks of diſtinction and kindneſs. He decorated him with a chain and bracelets of gold, and gave him a dagger of exquiſite workmanſhip, mounted with the ſame metal; clothed him in ſilk and damaſk after the Abyſſinian faſhion, and confirmed the ancient treaty with him. The fruit of all this was preſently ſeen; the king and his new ally fell ſuddenly upon Serké, put all the male inhabitants to the ſword, ſold the women and children as

ſlaves, and burned the town to the ground. The ſame they did to every inhabited place on that ſide of the frontier, weſt to Fazuclo. After which, the king, having ſent a ſarcaſtic compliment to Baady, returned to Dancaz, taking Wed Ageeb with him.

Socinios had only ravaged the frontier of the kingdom of Sennaar to the weſtward, from Serkè towards Fazuclo. This was but a part of the large ſcheme of vengeance he had reſolved to execute progreſſively from Serkè, in reparation of the affront he had received from the king of the Funge. But he delegated what remained to the two princes his ſons, and to the governor of Tigrè.

Welled Hawaryat, at the head of the Koccob horſe, and another body of cavalry reckoned equal in valour, called *Maia*, and the greateſt part of the king's houſehold troops, were ordered to fall upon that part of the frontier of Sennaar which the king had left from Serké eaſtward. Melca Chriſtos, with the horſe of Siré and Samen, was appointed to attack the frontier ſtill farther eaſt, oppoſite to the province of Sirè. Tecla Georgis, governor of Tigrè, was directed to lay waſte that part of the kingdom of Sennaar bordering upon the frontiers of his province.

The whole of this expedition ſucceeded to a wiſh; only Melea Chriſtos, in paſſing through the country of Shangalla, was met by a large army of that people, who, thinking the expedition intended againſt them, had attacked him in his paſſage, with ſome appearance of advantage; but by his own exertions, and thoſe of his troops alarmed at their prince's danger, he not only extricated himſelf from the

the bad ſituation he was in, but gave the Shangalla ſo entire an overthrow, that one of their tribes was nearly exterminated by that day's ſlaughter, and crowds of women and children ſent ſlaves to the king at Dancaz.

The delay that this occaſioned had no bad effect upon the expedition. The victorious troops poured immediately into Atbara under Melca Chriſtos, and completed the deſtruction made by Welled Hawaryat, and the governor of Tigré. All Sennaar was filled with people flying from the conquerors, and an immenſe number of cattle was driven away by the three armies. Baady ſeems to have been an idle ſpectator of this havock made in his kingdom; and the armies returned without loſs to Dancaz, loaded with plunder.

Still the vengeance of Socinios was not ſatisfied. The Baharnagaſh, Guebra Mariam, was commanded to march againſt Fatima queen of the Shepherds, called at that time Neguſta Errum, queen of the Greeks. This was a princeſs who governed the remnant of that ancient race of people, once the ſovereigns of the whole country, who, for ſeveral dynaſties, were maſters of Egypt, and who ſtill, among their ancient cuſtoms, preſerved that known one, of always placing a woman upon the throne. Her reſidence was at Mendera*, on the N. E. of Atbara, one of the largeſt and moſt populous towns in it; a town, indeed, built like the reſt, of clay, ſtraw, and reeds, but not leſs populous or flouriſhing on that account. It was in the way of the caravans from Suakem, both to Abyſſinia and Sennaar, as alſo of thoſe large caravans to and from Sudan, the Negro country upon the Niger, which then came, and ſtill uſe that road in their way to Mecca. Its female ſovereign was conſidered as guardian

* See the Map.

guardian of that communication, and the caravans paſſing it.

THE Baharnagaſh had in orders from Socinios to purſue this queen till he had taken her priſoner, and to bring her in that condition into his preſence. The enterpriſe was by no means an eaſy one. Great part of the road was without water; but Guebra Mariam, the Baharnagaſh, was an active and prudent officer, and perfectly acquainted with the ſeveral parts of the country. With a ſmall, but veteran army, he marched down the Mareb, between that river and the mountains, deſtroying all the places through which he paſſed, putting the inhabitants unmercifully to the ſword, that no one might approach him, nor any report be made of his numbers, which were everywhere magnified by thoſe that eſcaped, and who computed them from the greatneſs of the deſolation they had occaſioned.

ON the 13th day he came before Mendera, and ſent a ſummons to the queen Fatima to ſurrender. Being told that ſhe had fled on his approach, he anſwered, That he cared not where ſhe was; but that, unleſs ſhe ſurrendered herſelf priſoner before he entered Mendera, he would firſt ſet the town on fire, and then quench the flames by the blood of its inhabitants.

FATIMA, though old and infirm, was too great a lover of her people to riſk the fulfilling this threat from any conſideration of what might happen to her. She ſurrendered herſelf to Guebra Mariam, with two attendants; and he, without loſs of time, marched back to his own country, abſtaining from every ſort of violence or exceſs in his way,

from reſpect to his female priſoner, whom he brought in triumph before Socinios to Dancaz, and was the firſt meſſenger of his own victory.

Socinios received this queen of the Greeks on his throne; but, in conſideration of her infirmities, diſpenſed with the ceremony of proſtration, conſtantly obſerved in Abyſſinia on being introduced to the preſence of the king: ſeeing that ſhe was unable to ſtand during the time of her interrogation, he ordered a low ſtool to be ſet for her on the ground; a piece of conſideration very rarely ſhewn to any ſtranger in Abyſſinia, however great their dignity and quality.

Socinios ſternly demanded of his priſoner, "Why ſhe and her predeceſſors, being vaſſals to the crown of Abyſſinia, had not only omitted the payment of their tribute, but had not even ſent the cuſtomary preſents to him upon his acceſſion to the throne?"

To this the queen anſwered with great frankneſs and candour, "That it was true, ſuch tributes and preſents were due, and were alſo punctually paid from old times by her anceſtors to his, as long as protection was afforded them and their people, and this was the principal cauſe of paying that tribute; but the Abyſſinians having firſt ſuffered the country to be in great part conquered by the Arabs, and then again by the Funge, without ever interfering, ſhe had concluded a peace with the Funge of Sennaar, and paid the tribute to them, in conſequence of which they defended her from the Arabs: That ſhe had had no ſoldiers but ſuch as were employed in keeping a ſtrict watch over the road through the deſert to Suakem, which was anciently truſted

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to her; that the other part of her ſubjects was occupied in keeping and rearing great herds of cattle for the markets of Sennaar and other towns, as well as camels for the caravans of Mecca, Cairo, and Sudan, both employments being of public benefit; and, therefore, as ſhe did harm to none, ſhe had a greater reaſon to wonder what could be his motive of ſending ſo far from home to ſeek her, and her harmleſs ſubjects, in the deſert, with ſuch effuſion of innocent blood."

The king hearing this ſagacious anſwer, which was followed by many others of the kind, was extremely pleaſed; but aſſured her, "That he intended to maintain his ancient right both over her ſubjects, and the Arabs under Wed Ageeb, who was now his vaſſal, in all the country from Fazuclo to Suakem; that he conſidered the Funge as uſurpers, and would certainly treat them as ſuch." After this Socinios diſmiſſed the queen, and gave her aſſurances of protection, having firſt cloathed her as his vaſſal in ſilk and damaſk, after the faſhion of women in her own country.

But it was not long before this train of ſucceſs met with a conſiderable check. Very ſoon afterwards, the king being in Gojam, a meſſage was brought to him from the principal people of Narea, informing him plainly, "That Benero, having become cruel and avaricious, put many people to death wantonly, and many more for the ſake of their money; having taken from them their wives and daughters, either for his own pleaſure, or to ſell them as ſlaves to the Galla—they had at laſt murdered him, and choſen a man in his room diſtinguiſhed for his virtue and goodneſs."

The king was very much exaſperated at this meſſage. He told them, however bad Benero might have been, he conſidered his murder as an inſult done to himſelf, and had, therefore, diſpatched Muſtapha Baſha with ſome troops, and given command to all the Mahometans in Narea to aſſiſt him, and to inquire into the death of Benero, and the merit of his ſucceſſor.

At the ſame time, the Galla made an inroad into Begemder; and Welled Hawaryat, aſſembling what troops he could, in haſte, to ſtop the deſolation of that province, and having come in ſight of the enemy, he was forſaken by his army, and ſlain, together with the Cantiba of Dembea, Amdo, and Nile Wed Ageeb prince of the Arabs, after fighting manfully for the king. Socinios, upon the arrival of this news, gave himſelf up to immoderate ſorrow; not ſo much for the loſs of his army which had miſbehaved, as for the death of Welled Hawaryat his favourite ſon, and Amdo and Nile, the two beſt officers in his army.

It will now be neceſſary that we look back a little to the ſtate of religious affairs in Abyſſinia, which began from this time to have influence in every meaſure, and greatly to promote the troubles of that empire; though they were by no means their only cauſe, as ſome have ſaid, with a view to throw greater odium upon the Jeſuits, who ſurely have enough to anſwer for, without inflaming the account by any exaggeration.

Paez, in the courſe of building the palace at Gorgora, had deſervedly aſtoniſhed the whole kingdom by a diſplay of his univerſal genius and capacity. If he was aſſiduous

and diligent in raiſing this fabric, he had not neglected the advancing of another, the converſion of Abyſſinia to the obedience of the ſee of Rome.

Ras Sela Christos (if we believe theſe miſſionaries) had converted himſelf, by reading with attention the Abyſſinian books only. Being about to depart from Gojam to fight againſt the Galla, he wanted very much to have made his renunciation and confeſſion in the preſence of Peter Paez. But, as he was buſied at Gorgora building a convent and palace there, he contented himſelf with another Jeſuit, Franciſco Antonio d'Angelis; and, being victorious in his expedition, he gave the fathers ground and a ſum of money to build a monaſtery at Collela, which was now the third in Abyſſinia belonging to the Jeſuits.

As for the king, though probably already determined in his own mind, he had not taken any ſtep ſo deciſive as could induce the compliance of others. Diſputes were conſtantly maintained, for the moſt part in his preſence, between the miſſionaries and the Abyſſinian monks, chiefly concerning the long-agitated queſtion, the two natures in Chriſt, in which, although the victory declared always in favour of the Jeſuits, if we may credit their repreſentations, no conviction followed on the part of the adverſaries. At laſt Abuna Simon complained to the king, that unuſual and irregular things had been permitted without his knowledge; that diſputes upon articles of faith had been held without calling him, or his being permitted to give his clergy the advantage of his ſupport in theſe controverſies.

The king, who did not believe that the Abuna's eloquence or learning would make any great alteration, ordered the diſputations to be held a-new in the Abuna's preſence. That prieſt's ignorance made the matter worſe; and the king, holding this point as now ſettled, made his firſt public declaration, that there were two natures in Chriſt, perfect God and perfect man, really diſtinct between themſelves, but united in one divine perſon, which is the Chriſt.

At this time, letters came by way of India, both from the king of Spain, Philip II. dated in Madrid the 15th of March 1609, and from the pope Paul V. of the 4th of January 1611. Theſe letters contain nothing but general declamatory exhortations to Socinios to perſevere in the Chriſtian faith, aſſuring him of the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, inſtead of thoſe Portugueſe regiments which he had ſolicited. However, the affair of the converſion being altogether ſettled between the king and Paez, it was thought proper to make the renunciation firſt, and then depend upon the king of Spain and the pope for ſending the ſoldiers, if their prayers were not effectual.

It was neceſſary that Socinios ſhould write to the pope, notifying his ſubmiſſion to the ſee of Rome. But letters on ſuch a ſubject were thought of too great conſequence to be ſent, as former diſpatches to Europe had been, without being accompanied by proper perſons, who, upon occaſion, might aſſume the character of ambaſſadors, and give any aſſurance or explanation needful.

It was at the ſame time conſidered, that the way by Maſuah was ſo liable to accidents, the intermediate province of Tigré

Tigré being ſtill as it were in a ſtate of rebellion, that it would be eaſy for the enemies of the Catholic faith to intercept theſe meſſengers and letters by the way, ſo that their contents might be publiſhed amongſt the king's enemies in Abyſſinia, without ever being made known in Europe. Some propoſed the longer, but, as they apprehended, the more ſecure way, by paſſing Narea and the provinces ſouth of the frontiers of that kingdom, partly inhabited by Gentiles, partly by Mahometans, to Melinda, on the Indian Ocean, where they might embark for Goa.

Lots were caſt among the miſſionaries who of their number ſhould undertake this long and dangerous journey. The lot fell upon Antonio Fernandes, a man of great prudence, much eſteemed by the king, and by the general voice allowed to be the propereſt of all the ſociety for this undertaking. He, on his part, named Fecur Egzie *(beloved of the Lord)* as his companion, to be ambaſſador to the king of Spain and the pope. This man had been one of the firſt of the Abyſſinians converted to the Catholic faith by the Jeſuits, and he continued in it ſteadily to his death. He was a perſon of tried courage and prudence, and of a pleaſant and agreeable converſation.

It was the beginning of March 1613 Antonio Fernandes* ſet out for Gojam, where was Ras Sela Chriſtos. Fecur Egzie had ſet out before, that he might adjuſt his family affairs, and took with him ten Portugueſe, ſix of whom were to go

* See the provincial letters of the Jeſuits in Tellez, lib. iv. cap. 5.

no farther than Narea, and return, the other four to embark with him for India.

The governor detained the ſmall company till he procured guides from among the Shats and Gallas, barbarous nations near Narea, and eaſtward of it, from whom he took hoſtages for properly protecting this caravan in their way, paying them well, as an encouragement for behaving honeſtly and faithfully.

On the 15th of April they had ſet out from Umbarma, then the head-quarters of Sela Chriſtos, who gave them for guards forty men armed with ſhields and javelins. Nor was it long before their difficulties began. Travelling about two days to the weſt, they came to Senaffé, the principal village or habitation of the Pagan Gongas, very recently in rebellion, and nearly deſtroyed, rather than ſubdued. To the firſt demand of ſafe conduct, they anſwered in a manner which ſhewed that, far from defending the travellers from others, they were reſolved themſelves to fall upon them, and rob or murder them in the way. One Portugueſe offered himſelf to return with Fernandes to complain of theſe ſavages to Sela Chriſtos; who, upon their arrival, diſpatched three officers with troops to chaſtiſe theſe Pagans, and convey the ambaſſador and his attendants out of their territory and reach.

The Gongas, being informed that a complaint was ſent to Sela Chriſtos, which would infallibly be followed by a detachment of troops, gave the ambaſſador the ſafeguard he demanded, which carried him in three days to Minè*. This

* Which ſignifies the Paſſage.

This is the name of ſome miſerable villages, often rebuilt, and as often deſtroyed, upon a ford of the Nile, over which is the ordinary paſſage for the Mahometan merchants into Bizamo, the way to the mountainous country of Narea and Caffa. As the rains had begun to fall here with violence, when Fernandes and his companions arrived, they were obliged to paſs the river on ſkins blown full of wind.

The diſtance from Minè to Narea is 50 leagues due ſouth, with little inclination to weſt. The road to it, and the places through which you paſs, are very diſtinctly ſet down in my map, and, I believe, without any material error; it is the only place where the reader can find this route, which, till now, has never been publiſhed.

The next day our travellers entered the kingdom of Bizamo, inhabited by Pagan Galla. Theſe people came in crowds with arms in their hands, inſiſting upon being paid for liberty of paſſing through their country; but, ſeeing the company of the ambaſſador take to their arms likewiſe, they compounded for a few bricks of ſalt and coarſe cotton cloaths, and thereupon ſuffered them to paſs. The ſame day, the guide, ſent from Narea to conduct them by crooked and unfrequented paths out of the way of the Pagan Galla, made them to enter into a large thicket through which they could ſcarcely force themſelves; after which they came to a river called *Maleg*, when it was nearly night. Next day they could find no ford where they could paſs. They now entertained a ſuſpicion, that the guard from Narea had betrayed them, and intended to leave them in theſe woods to meet their death from the Galla.

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The day after, they found the ford, and paſſed it without difficulty; and, being on the other ſide, they began to be a little more compoſed, as being far from the Pagans, and now near entering the territory of Narea. After aſcending a high mountain, they came to Gonea, where they found a garriſon under one of the principal officers of that kingdom, who received them with great marks of honour and joy, on account of the warm recommendation Sela Chriſtos had given them, and perhaps as much for a conſiderable preſent they had brought along with them.

Narea, the ſouthmoſt province of the Abyſſinian empire, is ſtill governed by its native princes, who are called *the Beneros;* its territory reached formerly to Bizamo.

The Galla have quite ſurrounded them, eſpecially on the ſouth-eaſt and north. What is to the weſt is a part of Africa, the moſt unknown. The people of Narea have a ſmall trade with Melinda on the Indian Ocean, and with Angola on the weſtern, by means of intermediate nations. Narea is abundantly ſupplied with gold from the Negro country that is neareſt them. Some have, indeed, ſaid there is gold in Narea; but, after a very diligent inveſtigation, I find it comes chiefly from towards the Atlantic.

The kingdom of Narea ſtands like a fortified place in the middle of a plain. Many rivers, riſing in the fourth and fifth degrees of latitude, ſpread themſelves, for want of level, over this flat country, and ſtagnate in very extenſive marſhes from ſouth by eaſt, to the point of north, or north-weſt.

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THE foot of the mountains, or edge of theſe marſhes neareſt Narea, is thick overgrown with coffee-trees, which, if not the *only*, is the *largeſt* tree known there. Then comes the mountainous country of Narea Proper, which is interſperſed with ſmall, unwholeſome, but very fertile valleys. Immediately adjoining is the more mountainous country of Caffa, without any level ground whatever. It is ſaid to be governed by a ſeparate prince: they were converted to Chriſtianity in the time of Melec Segued, ſome time after the converſion of Narea. The Galla, having ſettled themſelves in all the flat ground to the very edge of the marſhes, have, in great meaſure, cut off the communication with Abyſſinia for many years together; ſo that their continuance in the Chriſtian faith ſeems very precarious and uncertain, for want of books and prieſts to inſtruct them.

THE Nareans of the high country are the lighteſt in colour of any people in Abyſſinia; but thoſe that live by the borders of the marſhes below are perfect blacks, and have the features and wool of negroes: whereas all thoſe in the high country of Narea, and ſtill more ſo in the ſtupendous mountains of Caffa, are not ſo dark as Neopolitans or Sicilians. Indeed it is ſaid that ſnow has been ſeen to lie on the mountains of Caffa, as alſo in that high ridge called Dyre and Tegla; but this I do not believe. Hail has probably been ſeen to lie there; but I doubt much whether this can be ſaid of a ſubſtance of ſo looſe a texture as ſnow.

THERE is great abundance both of cattle, grain, and all ſorts of proviſions in Narea, as well in the high as in the low country. Gold, which they ſell by weight, is the medium of commerce within the country itſelf; but coarſe

cotton cloths, ſtibium, beads, and incenſe, are the articles with which their foreign trade to Angola, and the kingdoms on the Atlantic, is carried on.

The Nareans are exceedingly brave. Though they have been conquered, and driven out of the low country, it has been by multitudes—nation after nation pouring in upon them with a number of horſe to which they are perfect ſtrangers: But now, confined to the mountains, and ſurrounded by their marſhes and woods, they deſpiſe all further attempts of the Galla, and drive them from their frontiers whenever they approach too near.

In theſe ſkirmiſhes, or in ſmall robbing parties, thoſe Nareans are taken, whom the Mahometan merchants ſell at Gondar. At Conſtantinople, India, or Cairo, the women are more eſteemed as ſlaves than thoſe of any other part of the world, and the men are reckoned faithful, active, and intelligent. Both ſexes are remarkable for a chearful, kind diſpoſition, and, if properly treated, ſoon attach themſelves inviolably to their maſters. The language of Narea and Caffa is peculiar to that country, and is not a dialect of any neighbouring nation.

Antonio Fernandes in this journey, ſeeking to go to India by Melinda in company with Fecur Egzie ambaſſador, paſſed through this country; but none of the Jeſuits ever went to Narea with a view of converting the people, at which I have been often ſurpriſed. There was enough of gold and ignorance to have allured them. That ſoftneſs and ſimplicity of manners for which the Nareans are remarkable, their affection for their maſters and ſuperiors, and firm at-

tachment to them, would have been great advantages in the hands of the fathers. Every Abyſſinian would have encouraged them at the beginning of this miſſion; and, if once they had firmly eſtabliſhed themſelves in a country of ſo difficult acceſs, they might have bid defiance to prince Facilidas, and the perſecution that deſtroyed the progreſs of the Catholic faith in that reign.

From Gonea, in ſix days they came to the reſidence of Benero, the ſovereign of the country; ſince the conqueſt and converſion under Melec Segued, he is called Shum. The ambaſſador and Fernandes were received by the Benero with an air of conſtraint and coolneſs, though with civility. They found afterwards the cauſe of this was the inſinuation of a ſchiſmatic Abyſſinian monk, then at the court of that prince, who had told him that the errand of the ambaſſador and miſſionary to India was to bring Portugueſe troops that way into Abyſſinia, which would end in the deſtruction of Narea, if it did not begin with it.

Terrified at a danger ſo near, the Benero called a council, in which it was reſolved that the ambaſſador ſhould be turned from the direct road into the kingdom of Bali, to a much more inconvenient, longer, and dangerous one; and, the ambaſſador heſitating a little when this was propoſed, the Benero told him plainly, that he would not ſuffer him to paſs further by any other way than that of Bali.

Bali was once a province belonging to Abyſſinia, and was the firſt taken from them by the Galla. It is to the north-eaſt of Narea, to the weſt of the kingdom of Adel,

which ſeparates it from the ſea; of which ample mention has been already made in the beginning of this hiſtory.

This was to turn them to Cape Gardefan, the longeſt journey they could poſſibly make by land, and in the middle of their enemies; whereas the direction of the coaſt of the Indian Ocean running greatly to the weſtward, and towards Melinda, was the ſhorteſt journey they could make by land. Melinda, too, had many rich merchants, who, though Moors, did yet traffic in the Portugueſe ſettlements on the coaſt of Malabar, and had little intelligence or concern with the religious diſputes which raged in Abyſſinia.

However, I very much doubt whether this neareſt route could be accompliſhed, at leaſt by travellers, ſuch as Fecur Egzie, Fernandes, and their companions, all ignorant of the language, and, therefore, conſtantly at the diſcretion of interpreters, and the malice or private views of different people through whoſe hands they muſt have paſſed.

The Benero, having thus provided againſt the dangers with which his ſtate was threatened, if our travellers went by Melinda, made them a preſent of fifty cruſades of gold for the neceſſaries of their journey; and, as their way lay through the ſmall ſtate of Gingiro, and an ambaſſador from the ſovereign of that ſtate was then at Narea, he diſpatched that miniſter in great haſte, recommending the Portugueſe to his protection ſo long as they ſhould be in his territory.

Fecur Egzie and his company ſet out with the ambaſſador of Gingiro in a direction due eaſt; and the firſt day they arrived at a poſt of Narea, where was the officer who was

to give them a guard to the frontiers; and who, after ſome delay, in order to ſee what he could extort from them, at laſt gave them a party of eighty ſoldiers to conduct them to the frontiers.

After four long days journey through countries totally laid waſte by the Galla, keeping ſcouts conſtantly before them to give advice of the firſt appearance of any enemy, that they might hide themſelves in thickets and buſhes; at mid-day they began to deſcend a very ſteep craggy ridge of mountains, when the ambaſſador of Gingiro, now their conductor, warned them, that, before they got to the foot of the mountain, they ſhould enter into a very thick wood to hide themſelves till night, that they might not be diſcovered by the Galla ſhepherds feeding their flocks in the plain below; for only at night, when they had retired, could thoſe plains be paſſed in ſafety.

At four o'clock in the afternoon they began to enter the wood, and were lucky in getting a violent ſhower of rain, which diſlodged the Galla ſooner than ordinary, and ſent them and their cattle home to their huts. But it was, at the ſame time, very diſagreeable to our travellers on account of its exceſſive coldneſs. Next day, in the evening, deſcending another very rugged chain of mountains, they came to the banks of the large river Zebeé, as the Portugueſe call it; but its true name is Kibbeé, a name given it by the Mahometan merchants, (the only travellers in this country) from its whiteneſs, approaching to the colour of melted butter, which that word ſignifies.

THE river Zebeé, or Kibbeé, ſurrounds a great part of the kingdom of Gingiro. It has been miſtaken for the river El Aice, which runs into Egypt in a courſe parallel to the Nile, but to the weſt of it.

NAREA ſeems to be the higheſt land in the peninſula of Africa, ſo that here the rivers begin to run alternately towards the Cape of Good Hope and Mediterranean; but the deſcent at firſt is very ſmall on either ſide. In the adjoining latitudes, that is 4° on each ſide of the Line, it rains perpetually, ſo that theſe rivers, though not rapid, are yet kept continually full.

THIS of Zebeé, is univerſally allowed by the merchants of this country to be the head of the river Quilimancy, which, paſſing through ſuch a tract of land from Narea to near Melinda, muſt have opened a very conſiderable communication with the inland country.

THIS territory, called Zindero, or Gingiro, is a very ſmall one. The father and Fecur Egzie reſted the ſixth day from their ſetting out from Narea. The river Zebeè, by the deſcription of Fernandes, ſeems to incline from its ſource in a greater angle than any river on the north of that partition. He ſays it carries more water with it than the Nile, and is infinitely more rapid, ſo that it would be abſolutely impaſſable in the ſeaſon of rains, were it not for large rocks which abound in its channel.

THE paſſage was truly tremendous; trees were laid from the ſhore to the next immediate rock; from that rock to the next another tree was laid; then another that reached

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to the ſhore. Theſe trees were ſo elaſtic as to bend with the weight of a ſingle perſon. At a great diſtance below ran the foaming current of the river, ſo deep an abyſs that it turned the heads of thoſe who were paſſing on the moveable elaſtic ſupport or bridge above.

Yet upon this ſeeming inconvenience the exiſtence of that country depended. The Galla that ſurrounded it would have over-run it in a month, but for this river, always rapid and always full, whoſe ordinary communication by a bridge could be deſtroyed in a moment; and which, though it had one ford, yet this was uſeleſs, unleſs paſſengers had aſſiſtance from both ſides of the river, and conſequently could never be of ſervice to an enemy.

The terrible appearance of this tottering bridge for a time ſtopped the ambaſſador and miſſionary. They looked upon the paſſing upon theſe trembling beams as certainly incurring inevitable deſtruction. But the reflection of dangers that preſſed them behind overcame theſe fears, and they preferred the reſolution to run the riſk of being drowned in the river Zebeé, rather than, by ſtaying on the other ſide all night, to ſtand the chance of being murdered by the Galla. But, after all the men only could paſs the bridge, they were obliged to leave the mules on the other ſide till the next morning, with inſtructions to their people, that, upon the firſt appearance of the Galla, they ſhould leave them, and make their beſt way over the bridge, throwing down one of the trees after them. The next morning, two peaſants, ſubjects of Gingiro, ſhewed them the ford, where their beaſts paſſed over with great difficulty and danger, but without loſs.

It was neceſſary now to acquaint the king of Gingiro of their arrival in his kingdom, and to beg to be honoured with an audience. But he happened at that time to be employed in the more important buſineſs of conjuration and witchcraft, without which this ſovereign does nothing.

This kingdom of Gingiro may be fixed upon as the firſt on this ſide of Africa where we meet with the ſtrange practice of divining from the apparition of ſpirits, and from a direct communication with the devil: A ſuperſtition this which likewiſe reaches down all along the weſtern ſide of this continent on the Atlantic Ocean, in the countries of Congo, Angola, and Benin. In ſpite of the firmeſt foundation in true philoſophy, a traveller, who decides from the information and inveſtigation of facts, will find it very difficult to treat theſe appearances as abſolute fiction, or as owing to a ſuperiority of cunning of one man in over-reaching another. For my own part, I confeſs I am equally at a loſs to aſſign reaſons for diſbelieving the fiction on which their pretenſions to ſome preternatural information are founded, as to account for them by the operation of ordinary cauſes. The king of Gingiro found eight days neceſſary before he could admit the ambaſſador and Fernandes into his preſence. On the ninth, they received a permiſſion to go to court, and they arrived there the ſame day.

When they came into the preſence of the king he was ſeated in a large gallery, open before, like what we call a balcony, which had ſteps from below on the outſide, by which he aſcended and deſcended at pleaſure. When the letter which the ambaſſador carried was intimated to him, he came down from the gallery to receive it, a piece of reſpect

ſpect which he ſhewed to the king of Abyſſinia, though he was neither his ſubject nor vaſſal. He inquired much after the king's health, and ſtood a little by the ambaſſador and Fernandes, ſpeaking by an interpreter. Afterwards he again returned to his balcony, ſat down there, read his letter, and then correſponded with the ambaſſador by meſages ſent from above to them below.

It is impoſſible to conceive from this, or any thing that Fernandes ſays, whether the language of Gingiro is peculiar to that country or not. The king of Gingiro read Socinios's letter, which was either in the Tigrè or Arabic language. Fernandes underſtood the Arabic, and Fecur Egzie the Tigrè and Amharic. It is not poſſible, then, to know what was the language of the king of Gingiro, who read and underſtood Socinios's letter, but ſpoke to Fecur Egzie by an interpreter.

At laſt the king of Gingiro told them, that all contained in the king of Abyſſinia's letter was, that he ſhould uſe them well, give them good guard and protection while they were in his country, and further them on their journey; which he ſaid he would execute with the greateſt pleaſure and punctuality.

The next day, as is uſual, the ambaſſador and miſſionary carried the king's preſent, chints, calicoe, and other manufactures of India, things that the king eſteemed moſt. In return to Fernandes he ſent a young girl, whom the father returned, it not being cuſtomary, as he ſaid, for a Chriſtian prieſt to have girls in his company. In exchange for the girl, the good-natured king of Gingiro ſent him a ſlave of

the other ſex, and a beautiful mule. With all reſpect to the ſcruples of the father, I think it would have been fair to have kept the beautiful mule, and given the young female Gingerite to his companion in the journey, Fecur Egzie, who could have had no ſcruples.

Fernandes ſays he received the boy from the only view of ſaving his ſoul by baptiſm. I wonder, ſince Providence had thrown the girl firſt in his way, by what rule of charity it was he conſigned her ſoul to perdition by returning her, as he was not certain at the time that he might not have got a mule or camel in exchange for the girl; and then, upon his own principles, he certainly was author of the perdition of that ſoul which Providence ſeemed to have conducted by an extraordinary way to the enjoyment of all the advantages of Chriſtianity; ſurely the care of Neophytes of the female ſex was not a new charge to the Jeſuits in Abyſſinia.

It ſeems to be ridiculous for Fernandes to imagine that the ſovereign of this little ſtate called himſelf Gingiro, knowing that this word ſignified a monkey. His enemies might give him that name; but it is not likely he would adopt it himſelf. And the reaſon of that name is ſtill more ridiculous; for he ſays it is becauſe the gallery is like a monkey's cage. If that was the caſe, all the princes in Congo and Angola give their audiences in ſuch places. Indeed, it ſeems to me that it is here the cuſtoms, uſed in theſe laſt-mentioned parts of Africa, begin, although Gingiro is nearer the coaſt of the Indian Ocean than that of the Atlantic. The colour of the people at Gingiro is nearly black, ſtill it

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is not the black of a negro; the features are ſmall and ſtraight as in Europe or Abyſſinia.

All matters in this ſtate are conducted by magic; and we may ſee to what point the human underſtanding is debaſed in the diſtance of a few leagues. Let no man ſay that ignorance is the cauſe, or heat of climate, which is the unintelligible obſervation generally made on theſe occaſions. For why ſhould heat of climate addict a people to magic more than cold? or, why ſhould ignorance enlarge a man's powers, ſo that, overleaping the bounds of common intelligence, it ſhould extend his faculty of converſing with a new ſet of beings in another world? The Ethiopians, who nearly ſurround Abyſſinia, are blacker than thoſe of Gingiro, their country hotter, and are, like them, an indigenous people that have been, from the beginning, in the ſame part where they now inhabit. Yet the former neither adore the devil, nor pretend to have a communication with him: they have no human ſacrifices, nor are there any traces of ſuch enormities having prevailed among them. A communication with the ſea has been always open, and the ſlave-trade prevalent from the earlieſt times; while the king of Gingiro, ſhut up in the heart of the continent, ſacrifices thoſe ſlaves to the devil which he has no opportunity to ſell to man. For at Gingiro begins that accurſed cuſtom of making the ſhedding of human blood a neceſſary part in all ſolemnities. How far to the ſouthward this reaches I do not know; but I look upon this to be the geographical bounds of the reign of the devil on the north ſide of the equator in the peninſula of Africa.

This kingdom is hereditary in one family, but does not deſcend in courſe to the eldeſt ſon, the election of the particular prince being in the nobles; and thus far, indeed, it ſeems to reſemble that of their neighbours in Abyſſinia.

When the king of Gingiro dies, the body of the deceaſed is wrapped in a fine cloth, and a cow is killed. They then put the body ſo wrapped up into the cow's ſkin. As ſoon as this is over, all the princes of the royal family fly and hide themſelves in the buſhes; while others, intruſted with the election, enter into the thickets, beating everywhere about as if looking for game. At laſt a bird of prey, called in their country Liber, appears, and hovers over the perſon deſtined to be king, crying and making a great noiſe without quitting his ſtation. By this means the perſon deſtined to be elected is found, ſurrounded, as is reported, by tigers, lions, panthers, and ſuchlike wild beaſts. This is imagined to be done by magic, or the devil, elſe there are everywhere enough of theſe beaſts lying in the cover to furniſh materials for ſuch a tale, without having recourſe to the power of magic to aſſemble them.

As they find their king, then, like a wild beaſt, ſo his behaviour continues the ſame after he is found. He flies upon them with great rage, reſiſting to the laſt, wounding and killing all he can reach without any conſideration, till, overcome by force, he is dragged to a throne, which he fills in a manner perfectly correſponding to the rationality of the ceremonies of his inſtalment.

Although there are many that have a right to ſeek after this king, yet, when he is diſcovered, it does not follow,

that the ſame perſon who finds him ſhould carry him to his coronation; for there is a family who have a right to diſpute this honour with the firſt poſſeſſor; and, therefore, in his way from the wood, they ſet upon the people in whoſe hands he is, and a battle enſues, where ſeveral are killed or wounded; and if theſe laſt, by force, can take him out of the hands of the firſt finder, they enjoy all the honours due to him that made him king.

Before he enters his palace two men are to be ſlain; one at the foot of the tree by which his houſe is chiefly ſupported; the other at the threſhold of his door, which is beſmeared with the blood of the victim. And, it is ſaid, (I have heard this often in Abyſſinia from people coming from that country) that the particular family, whoſe priviledge it is to be ſlaughtered, ſo far from avoiding it, glory in the occaſion, and offer themſelves willingly to meet it.—To return to our travellers—

The father and the ambaſſador, leaving the kingdom of Gingiro, proceeded in a direction due eaſt, and entered the kingdom of Cambat, depending ſtill on the empire of Abyſſinia, and there halted at Sangara, which ſeems to be the principal place of the province, governed at that time by a Moor called *Amelmal*.

On the left of Cambat are the Guragués, who live in ſome beggarly villages, but moſtly in caves and holes in the mountains. The father was detained two days at Sangara, at the perſuaſion of the inhabitants there, who told him there was a fair in the neighbourhood, and people would paſs in numbers to accompany him, ſo that there would

would be no danger. But, after ſtaying that time at Sangara, he found that the intention of this delay was only to give time to ſome horſemen of the Guragués to aſſemble, in order to attack the caravan on the road, which they did ſoon after; and, though they were repulſed, yet it was with loſs of one of the company, a young man related to Socinios, who, being wounded with a poiſoned arrow, died ſome days after.

In the mean time, an Abyſſinian, called *Manquer*, overtook their caravan. As he was a ſchiſmatic, his intention was very well known to be that of diſappointing their journey; and he prevailed with Amelmal ſo far as to make him ſuſpect that the recommendations which the ambaſſador brought were falſe. He, therefore, inſiſted on the ambaſſador's ſtaying there till he ſhould get news from court. Amelmal, Manquer, and the ambaſſador, each diſpatched a meſſenger, who tarried three months on the road, and at laſt brought orders from the king to diſpatch them immediately.

As Amelmal now ſaw the bad inclination of Manquer, he detained him at Cambat that he might occaſion no more difficulties in their way. He gave the ambaſſador likewiſe ſeven horſes, which were ſaid to be the beſt preſents to the princes or governors that were in his road, and diſpatched the travellers with another companion, Baharo, who had brought the letters from the king.

From Cambat they entered the ſmall territory of Alaba, independent of the king of Abyſſinia, whoſe governor was called *Aliko*, a Moor. This man, already prejudiced againſt the

the miſſionary and the ambaſſador, was ſtill heſitating whether to allow them to proceed, when Manquer, who fled from Amelmal, arrived. Aliko, hearing from this incendiary, that the father's errand was to bring Portugueſe that way from India to deſtroy the Mahometan faith, as in former times, burſt into ſuch violent rage as to threaten the father, and all with him, with death, which nothing but the reality of the king's letters, of which he had got aſſurance from Baharo, and ſome regard to the law of nations, on account of the ambaſſador Fecur Egzie, could have prevented. In the mean time, he put them all in cloſe priſon, where ſeveral of the Portugueſe died. At laſt, after a council held, in which Manquer gave his voice for putting them to death, a man of ſuperior character in that country adviſed the ſending them back to Amelmal, the way that they came; and this meaſure was accordingly adopted.

They returned, therefore, from Cambat, and thence to Gorgora, without any ſort of advantage to themſelves or to us, only what ariſes from that opportunity of rectifying the geography of the country through which they paſſed; and even for this they have furniſhed but very ſcanty materials, in compariſon of what we might reaſonably have expected, without having occaſioned any additional fatigue to themſelves.

We have already ſaid, that though Socinios had not openly declared his reſolution of embracing the Catholic faith, yet he had gone ſo far as to declare, upon the diſpute held between the Catholic and ſchiſmatic clergy, in his own preſence and that of the Abuna, that the Abyſſinian

diſputants were vanquiſhed, and ought to have been convinced from the authority of their own books, eſpecially that of Haimanout Abou, the faith of the ancient fathers and doctors of their church received by them from the beginning as the undoubted rule of faith: That the doctrine of the Catholic church being only what was taught in the Haimanout Abou concerning the two natures in Chriſt, this point was to all intents and purpoſes ſettled; and, therefore, he ſignified it as his will, that, for the future, no one ſhould deny that there are two natures in Chriſt, diſtinct in themſelves, but divinely united in one perſon, which was Chriſt; declaring at the ſame time, that in caſe any perſon ſhould hereafter deny, or call this in doubt, he would chaſtiſe him for ſeven years.

The Abuna, on the contrary, ſupported by the half-brother of the king, Emana Chriſtos, (brother to Ras Sela Chriſtos) publiſhed a ſentence of excommunication, by affixing it to the door of one of the churches belonging to the palace, in which he declared all perſons accurſed who ſhould maintain two natures in Chriſt, or embrace or vindicate any of the errors of the church of Rome.

The king had received various complaints of the Agows, who had abuſed his officers, and refuſed payment of tribute. He had ſet out upon an expedition againſt them, intending to winter in that country; but, hearing of the raſh conduct of the Abuna, and the leagues that were in conſequence everywhere forming againſt him, he returned to Gorgora, and ſent to the Abuna, that unleſs, without delay, he recalled the excommunication he had publiſhed, he ſhould be forthwith puniſhed with loſs of his head. This language

was

was too clear and explicit to admit a doubt of its meaning; and the Abuna, giving way for the time, recalled his excommunication.

A CONSPIRACY was next formed by Emana Chriſtos, the eunuch Kèfla Wahad maſter of the houſehold to the king, and Julius governor of Tigrè, to murder Socinios in his palace; for which purpoſe they deſired an audience upon weighty affairs, which being granted by the king, the three conſpirators were admitted into his preſence.

IT was concerted that Julius ſhould preſent a petition of ſuch a nature as probably to produce a refuſal; and, in the time of the altercation that would enſue, when the king might be off his guard, the other two were to ſtab him.

JUST before the converſation began, he was adviſed of his danger by a page, and Julius preſenting his petition, the king granted it immediately, before Emana Chriſtos could come up to aſſiſt in the diſpute which they expected; and this conſpirator appearing in the inſtant, the king, who had got up to walk, invited them all three up to the terrace. This was the moſt favourable opportunity they could have wiſhed. They, therefore, deferred aſſaulting him till they ſhould have got up to the terrace: The king entered the door of the private ſtair, and drew it haſtily after him. It had a ſpring-lock made by Peter Paez, which was fixed in the inſide, and could not be opened from without, ſo that the king was left ſecure upon the terrace. Upon this the conſpirators, fearing themſelves diſcovered, retired, and from that time reſolved to keep out of the king's power.

At that period, Socinios had determined upon an expedition againſt the Funge, that is, againſt the blacks of Sennaar, who had entered his country in a violent manner, deſtroying his people, and carrying them off as ſlaves. It was, therefore, concerted, that while the king was buſied far off with the Funge, Emana Chriſtos, Julius, and the eunuch Kèfla, at once ſhould attack Sela Chriſtos, at whom, next to the king, the conſpirators chiefly aimed; and the cauſe was, that the king had taken the poſts of Ras and the government of Gojam from Emana Chriſtos, who was a ſchiſmatic, and had given them to his younger brother, Sela Chriſtos, a violent Catholic.

Julius began by a proclamation in Woggora, in which he commanded, that thoſe who believed two natures in Chriſt ſhould immediately leave the province, and that all thoſe who were friends to the Alexandrian faith ſhould forthwith repair to him, and fight in defence of it. He then ordered the goods of all the Catholics in Tigrè to be confiſcated, and ſtraightway marched to ſurpriſe Sela Chriſtos then in Gojam. But the king received intelligence of his deſigns, and returned into Dembea before it was well known that he had left it. This, at firſt, very much diſconcerted Julius; and the rather, that Emana Chriſtos and Kéfla Wahad kept aloof, nor had they declared themſelves openly yet, nor did they ſeem inclined to do it till Julius had firſt tried his fortune with the king.

This rebel, now full of preſumption, advanced with his army to where the Nile iſſues out of the great lake Tzana; and there he found the Abuna Simon, who had ſtaid for ſome weeks in one of the iſlands upon pretence of devotion.

Simon,

Simon, after having confirmed Julius in his reſolution of murdering the king, his father-in-law, or of dying in defence of the Alexandrian faith, if neceſſary, perſuaded him to lay aſide his deſign of marching againſt Sela Chriſtos, but rather immediately to return back and ſurpriſe the king before theſe two joined.

Julius readily adopted this advice of the Abuna; while that prieſt, to ſhew he was ſincere, offered to accompany him in perſon, and ſhare his fortune. This was accepted with pleaſure by Julius, who next morning received the Abuna's benediction at the head of his army, and aſſiſted at a ſolemn excommunication pronounced againſt the king, Sela Chriſtos, the fathers, and all the Catholics at court.

The king's firſt thought, upon hearing theſe proceedings, was to ſend ſome troops to the aſſiſtance of Sela Chriſtos, warning him of his danger; but, upon hearing meaſures were changed, and that the firſt deſign was againſt himſelf, he marched to meet Julius, and ſent a meſſage to Sela Chriſtos to join him with all poſſible ſpeed; and, as he was an excellent general, he took his poſt ſo judiciouſly that he could not be forced to fight againſt his will till ſuccour was brought him, without great diſadvantage to the enemy.

Julius, fearing the junction of Sela Chriſtos, endeavoured to fight the two armies ſeparately. For which purpoſe he advanced and pitched his camp cloſe within ſight of that of Socinios, reſolving to force him to an engagement. This was thought a very dangerous meaſure, and was contrary to the advice of all his friends, who ſaw how judiciouſly Socinios had choſen his ground; and it was known to the meaneſt

ſoldier on both ſides, how conſummate the king was in the art of war.

But the Abuna having perſuaded him, that, as ſoon as the ſoldiers ſhould ſee him, they would abandon the king and join his colours, early in the morning he put on his coat of mail, and, mounted on a ſtrong and fiery horſe, was proceeding to the king's camp, when Malacotawit, his wife, (daughter to Socinios) perſuaded him at leaſt to take ſome food to enable him to bear the fatigues of the day. But diſdaining ſuch advice, he only anſwered furiouſly, "That he had ſworn not to taſte meat till he had brought her her father's head;" and, without longer waiting for the reſt of his troops, he leaped over the enemy's lines in a quarter where the Abuna had promiſed he ſhould be well received.

Indeed, on his firſt appearance, no one there oppoſed his paſſage, but ſeemed rather inclined to favour him as the Abuna had promiſed: And he had now advanced near to a body of Tigrè ſoldiers that were the guard of the king's tent, loudly crying, "Where is your emperor?" when one of theſe with a ſtone ſtruck him ſo rudely upon the forehead that it felled him to the ground; and, being now known, another ſoldier (called Amda) thruſt him through with a ſword, and thereafter killed him with many wounds. His head was cut off and carried to Socinios.

The few that attended him periſhed likewiſe among the ſoldiers. Nor did any of Julius's army think of a battle, but all fought their ſafety by a flight. The king's troops being all freſh, purſued the ſcattered rebels with great vigour,

gour, and many were ſlain, without any loſs on the part of the royaliſts.

The Abuna Simon had, for a conſiderable time, ſtood as an eccleſiaſtic, unhurt and unheeded, among the flying troops. Being at laſt diſtinguiſhed by his violent vociferation, and repeated imprecations upon the king and the conquerors, he was ſlain by a common ſoldier, who cut his head off and carried it to Socinios, who ordered it, with the body, to be taken from the field of battle and buried in a church-yard.

Socinios gave the ſpoil of the camp to his ſoldiers. It was ſaid, that no time, ſince the Turks were defeated under Mahomet Gragné, was there ever ſo much treaſure found in a camp. The pride of Julius induced him to carry all his riches with him. They were the fruits of avarice and oppreſſion in all the principal poſts of the empire, and which in their turn he had enjoyed. They were likewiſe the ſpoils of the Catholics, newly acquired by the confiſcations made ſince his rebellion. A great number of cattle was likewiſe taken, which the king diſtributed among the prieſts of the ſeveral churches, the judges, and other lay-officers. Very great rejoicings were made everywhere, in the midſt of which arrived Ras Sela Chriſtos with his army from Gojam, and was ſtruck with aſtoniſhment on ſeeing the ſmall number of troops with which the king had been expoſed to fight Julius, and how complete a victory he had gained with them.

In the mean time, Emana Chriſtos had retired to a high mountain in Gojam, called *Melca Amba*, where he continued

to excite the people of that province to rebel and join Julius, whoſe arrival he daily expected, that, together, they might fight Sela Chriſtos. But the raſhneſs of Julius, and the march of Sela Chriſtos to the king's aſſiſtance, had very much diſconcerted their whole ſcheme.

Af Christos, who commanded in Gojam after the departure of Ras Sela Chriſtos, ſent to Melca Amba, "reproaching Emana Chriſtos with ſeditious practices; upbraiding him with the unnatural part he acted, being a brother-german to Sela Chriſtos, and brother to Socinios by the ſame mother, while Julius was married to his daughter, and had conſtantly enjoyed the great places of the empire. He aſked him, What they could be more? Kings they could not be, neither he nor Julius. Ras, the next place in the empire, they both had enjoyed; and, if the king had taken that office lately from Emana Chriſtos, he had not given it to a ſtranger, but to his brother Sela Chriſtos, who, it was but fair, ſhould have his turn; and that the importance of his family was not the leſs increaſed by it. Laſtly, he repreſented the danger he ran, if Julius made his peace, of falling a ſacrifice as the adviſer of the rebellion."

Emana Christos anſwered, "That though he rebelled with Julius, and at the ſame time, yet it was not as a follower of Julius, nor againſt the king; but that he took up arms in defence of the ancient faith of his country, which was now, without reaſon, trodden under foot in favour of a religion, which was a falſe one if they underſtood it, and an uſeleſs one if they did not. He ſaid he was ſatisfied of his own danger; but neither his connection with the king, nor his being related to Sela Chriſtos, could weigh with him

againſt his duty to God and his country. The king and his brother might be right in embracing the Romiſh religion, becauſe they were convinced of the truth of it: he had uſed, however, the ſame means, and the ſame application, had heard the arguments of the ſame fathers, which, unluckily for him, had convinced him their religion was not a true, but a falſe one. For the ſame reaſons he continued to be an Alexandrian, which his brother alledged had made him a Roman. He, therefore, begged Af Chriſtos to conſider, by a review of things ſince David III.'s time, how much blood the change would coſt to the kingdom by the attempt, whether it ſucceeded or not; and whether, after that conſideration, it was worth trying the experiment."

This artful and ſenſible meſſage, ſent by a man of the capacity and experience of Emana Chriſtos, eaſily convinced Af Chriſtos that it was not by argument Emana Chriſtos was to be brought to his duty; but, like a good officer, he kept up correſpondence with him, that he might be maſter of the intelligence to what place he retired.

Soon after Sela Chriſtos had left Gojam to join the king, by forced marches he ſurrounded Melca Amba, where Emana Chriſtos was, and had aſſembled a number of troops to deſcend into the plain and create a diverſion in favour of Julius. The mountain had neither water in it nor food for ſuch a number of men, nor had Emana Chriſtos forces enough to riſk a battle with an officer of the known experience of Af Chriſtos, who had choſen the ground at his full leiſure, and with complete knowledge of it.

THREE days the army within the mountain held out without complaining; but, in the evening of the third day, ſome monks and hermits (*holy men*, the abettors of this rebellion) came to Af Chriſtos to remonſtrate, that there were ſeveral convents and villages in the mountain, alſo ſmall ſprings, and barley enough to anſwer the neceſſities of the ordinary inhabitants, but were not enough for ſuch an additional number which had taken forcible poſſeſſion of the wells, and drank up all the water, to the immediate danger of the whole inhabitants periſhing with thirſt.

To this Af Chriſtos anſwered, That the reducing the mountain, and the taking Emana Chriſtos, was what was given him in commiſſion by the king, to attain which end he would carefully improve all the means in his power. He was ſorry, indeed, for the diſtreſs of the convents in the mountain; but could not help it; nor would he ſuffer one of them to remove or come down into the plain, nor would he diſcontinue blockading the mountain while Emana Chriſtos was there and alive. No other alternative, therefore, remained but the delivering up Emana Chriſtos. His army would have fought for him againſt a common enemy, but againſt thirſt their ſhields and ſwords were uſeleſs.

AF CHRISTOS, with his priſoner, forthwith proceeded to join the king, and paſſed the Nile into Begemder. At croſſing the river Baſhilo, they were informed of the defeat and death of Julius and the Abuna. The meſſenger had alſo letters for Emana Chriſtos, whom the king did not know to be yet priſoner: among theſe was one from Sela Chriſtos, in which he upbraided his brother with his unnatural treaſon, and aſſured him ſpeedily of a fate like that of Julius.

Emana

Emana Chriſtos received this intelligence almoſt dead with fear, for never was a prophecy made which ſeemed to have needed leſs time to accompliſh than this of his brother's.

At Christos ſurrendered his priſoner to the king at Dancaz, who immediately aſſembled a full convocation of judges of all degrees; and the priſoner being ordered to anſwer to his charge concerning the rebellion of Julius and his conſpiracy againſt the king's life, he took the part he had been adviſed, and palliated the whole of his actions, without poſitively denying any one of them, and ſubmitted to the king's mercy. The judges, conſidering the defence, unanimouſly found him guilty of death; but the king, whoſe laſt vote, when ſitting in judgment, ſuperſedes and overturns all the reſt, reprieved, and ſent him priſoner to Amhara.

Hitherto the king had contented himſelf with fixing two points in favour of the Roman church, in contradiction to that of Alexandria. The firſt denounced puniſhment to every one who did not believe that there are two natures in Chriſt, and that he is perfect God and perfect man, without confuſion of perſons. The ſecond was rather a point of diſcipline than of faith; yet it was urged as ſuch, by declaring it to be unlawful to obſerve Saturday, the ancient Jewiſh ſabbath. The firſt of theſe, if it was not the cauſe, had been aſſumed as the pretext for the rebellion of Julius. The ſecond produced that of Jonael governor of Begemder, of which we are now to ſpeak. But thus far only the king had gone. He had not openly joined the church of Rome, nor as yet renounced that of Alexandria, nor forced any one elſe to do ſo.

The firſt prelude to Jonael's rebellion was an anonymous letter written to the king, in which all the ſtale and lame arguments of the Alexandrians were raked together, and ſtated with a degree of preſumption worthy of the ignorance and obſtinacy of thoſe from whom they came. This, though ridiculous, and below notice in point of argument, offended greatly both the king and the Jeſuits, by the aſperity of its terms, and the perſonal applications contained in it. The king was treated as another Diocleſian, thirſting after Chriſtian blood, and for this devoted to hell; as were alſo the Jeſuits, whom they called relations of Pilate, in alluſion to their origin from Rome.

The king, grievouſly offended, added this injunction to the former proclamation, "That all out-door work, ſuch as plowing and ſowing, ſhould be publicly followed by the huſbandman on the Saturday, under penalty of paying a web of cotton cloth, for the firſt omiſſion, which cloth was to be of five ſhillings value; and the ſecond offence, was to be puniſhed by a confiſcation of moveables, and the crime not to be pardoned for ſeven years;"—the greateſt puniſhment for miſdemeanors in Abyſſinia. To this Socinios added, *vivâ voce*, from his throne, that he never *aboliſhed*, but *explained* and eſtabliſhed their religion, which always taught, as their own books could teſtify, that Chriſt was perfect God and perfect man, two diſtinct natures united in one hypoſtaſis of the eternal word; neither was it in compliance with the Jeſuits that he abrogated the obſervation of the Jewiſh ſabbath, but in obedience to the council of Chalcedon, which was founded in the holy ſcriptures, for which he was ready at all times to loſe his life, though he ſhould endea-

vour firſt to inflict that puniſhment on ſuch as were its enemies."

In order to ſhew that he did not mean to trifle, he ordered the tongue of a monk (called Abba Af Chriſtos) to be cut out, for denying the two natures in Chriſt; and Buco, one of the principal generals of his court (who afterwards died a zealous Catholic) he ordered to be beaten with rods, and degraded from his employment, for obſerving the Jewiſh ſabbath.

The king, having given theſe public, unequivocal teſtimonies of his reſolution, put himſelf at the head of his army, and marched againſt Jonael; but that rebel, not daring to meet his offended ſovereign, retired into the mountains; whereupon the king laid waſte the country of the Galla, who had protected him. This occaſioned a diviſion among the Galla themſelves. One party declaring for the king, apprehended Jonael with intention to deliver him up; but he was ſoon reſcued out of their hands by the contrary party, enemies to Socinios. His protectors being once known, the manner of working his deſtruction was ſoon known likewiſe. The king's preſents made their way to that faithleſs people, the only barbarians with whom the right of hoſpitality is not eſtabliſhed. Upon receiving the king's bribe, they murdered Jonael, cut his head off, and ſent it to the king.

The rebellion in Damot was not ſo eaſily quelled. Sela Chriſtos, a zealous Catholic, was ſent againſt the rebels to inforce the proclamation with regard to the ſabbath. But as his connections were very conſiderable among them, he

choſe firſt to endeavour, by fair means, to induce the ignorant ſavages to return to reaſon and obedience. With this view, he ſent to expoſtulate with them; and to beg that, in articles of faith, they would ſuffer themſelves to be examined and inſtructed by men of learning and good life; not by thoſe monks, ignorant like themſelves, from whom they only could learn vice, blaſphemy, and rebellion. To this the Damots anſwered, as one man, That, if his friendſhip for them and good intentions were real, he ſhould give them, for proof, the immediate burning of all the Latin books which had been tranſlated into the Ethiopian language, and that, then, he ſhould hang thoſe Jeſuits who were with him upon a high tree.

We are not, however, to conſider this was really from a conviction or perſuaſion of the Damots, who inhabit a province bordering upon the Agows and Gongas, and their chriſtianity much upon a par with that of either of theſe nations. But the fact was, that the fanatics and zealots for the Alexandrian faith had retired in great numbers to Damot, as to a province the worſt affected to the king, from the recent violence of Julius, who, in an expedition againſt the Shangalla, by order of the king had driven off the cattle of the peaceable Damots, who had been then guilty of no offence. And as theſe were ready to rebel for a quarrel merely their own, it was very eaſy for the ſchiſmatical monks to add this religious grievance to the ſum of the preceding.

Sela Christos had with him about 7000 men, moſt of them Catholics and veteran ſoldiers; and among theſe 40 Portugueſe, partly on foot, armed with muſquets, the others

on horſeback, clad in coats of mail. Very different was the army of Damots. They were ſuperior in number for they exceeded 12000 men, and among theſe were 400 monks, well armed with ſwords, lances, and ſhields, earneſtly bent upon the obtaining a crown of martyrdom in defence of their religion, from the innovation propoſed by Socinios. At the head of theſe was a fanatical monk (one Batacu) who promiſed them armies of angels, with flaming ſwords, who ſhould ſlay their enemies, but render them invulnerable, as he declared himſelf to be, either by ſword or lance.

The battle was fought at the foot of the mountains of Amid Amid, on the 6th of October 1620. Sela Chriſtos, ſure of victory, and unwilling to ſlaughter a people he had been uſed to protect, began firſt to ſhew his ſuperiority in ſlight ſkirmiſhes. After which, deſiring a parley, he ſent meſſengers to them, begging them to conſider their own danger, and offering them a general amneſty upon their ſubmiſſion. Theſe meſſengers were not allowed to approach, for ſhowers of arrows that were poured upon them; ſo the battle began with great animoſity on both ſides. The Damots were ſoon broken and put to flight by the ſuperiority of Sela Chriſtos's ſoldiers. But the 400 monks, already mentioned, fought moſt deſperately in defiance of numbers, nor did they ſeek their ſafety by a flight. One hundred and eighty of them were killed on the place they occupied, valiantly fighting to the very laſt. A rare example, and ſeldom found in hiſtory, that fanatics like theſe, always ready to rebel, ſhould perſiſt and ſacrifice their lives to the follies of their own preaching.

As for their celeſtial auxiliaries, whoſe aſſiſtance they were promiſed as far as could be diſcovered, they neither did harm nor good. We may ſuppoſe they ſtood neuter. But Batacu the hermit, ringleader of this ſedition, whoſe body was ſo miraculouſly armed, that neither ſword nor ſpear could make any impreſſion upon it, was unfortunately thruſt through with a lance in the very beginning of the engagement, which greatly ſerved to diſcredit theſe ſupernatural aids.

It was in this year 1620, that Socinios marched into Begemder againſt Jonael. At which time Peter Paez was employed at Gorgora in building the church there. The king returned immediately to Dancaz after the defeat of Jonael, and paſſed his winter at that place.

It was on the 16th of January 1621, that the dedication of the church of Gorgora was made by Peter Paez; and at that time the king was in Begemder. Upon his return to Dancaz he met Paez at Gorgora for the firſt time. He remained at Gorgora till the 3d of October of that year, when the news of the defeat of the Damots by Sela Chriſtos arrived, which he received in preſence of that prieſt at Gorgora. In this, both the Jeſuits and Abyſſinian annals agree. It is not then poſſible that Peter Paez could have been with the king at Sacala, or Geeſh, in the country of the Agows on the 21ſt of March 1621*; for both Peter Paez and Socinios were at that time in Gorgora.

At

* This will be more enlarged upon hereafter.

At this time the Ethiopic memoirs of Socinios's reign interrupted their continual topics of rebellion and bloodſhed, to record a very trifling anecdote; which, however, I inſert, as it ſerves to give ſome idea of the ſimplicity and ignorance of thoſe times.

The hiſtorian ſays, that this year there was brought into Abyſſinia, a bird called *Para*, which was about the bigneſs of a hen, and ſpoke all languages; Indian, Portugueſe, and Arabic. It named the king's name: although its voice was that of a man, it could likewiſe neigh like a horſe, and mew like a cat, but did not ſing like a bird. It was produced before the aſſembly of judges, of the prieſts, and the azages of court, and there it ſpoke with great gravity. The aſſembly, after conſidering circumſtances well, were unanimouſly of opinion, that the evil ſpirit had no part in endowing it with theſe talents. But to be certain of this, it was thought moſt prudent to take the advice of Ras Sela Chriſtos, then in Gojam, who might, if he thought fit, conſult the ſuperior of Mahebar Selaſſé; to them it was ſent, but it died on the road. The hiſtorian cloſes his narrative by this wiſe reflection on the parrot's death; "Such is the lot of all "fleſh."

The king, immediately after his victory over Jonael, had reſolved to throw off the maſk, and openly to profeſs the Catholic religion. The ſucceſs of Sela Chriſtos againſt the Damots had confirmed him. He had paſſed the rainy ſeaſon, as I have before obſerved, between Gorgora and Dancaz; and, in the uſual time, in the month of November, marched to Foggora, a narrow ſtripe of plain country, reaching from Emfras to Dara, bounded on one ſide by the lake Dem-

Dembea, and on the other by the mountains of Begemder.

For this purpoſe he ſent to Peter Paez, his ordinary confeſſor, to come to him; and, having told him his reſolution, he declared, that, in proof of the ſincerity of his converſion, he had put away all his wives (of whom he had ſeveral of the firſt quality, and many children by them) and retained only his firſt, by whom he had the eldeſt of his ſons, deſtined to ſucceed him in the empire.

Paez, having received his confeſſion, and public renunciation of the Alexandrian faith, returned to Gorgora ſinging his *nunc dimittis*, as if the great end of his miſſion was now completed; nor was he deceived in his prognoſtication. For, having too much heated himſelf with zeal in travelling, he was, upon his arrival, taken with a violent fever; and, tho' every ſort of remedy was adminiſtered to him by Antonio Fernandes, yet he died on the third of May 1623, with great demonſtrations of piety and reſignation, and firm conviction, that he had done his duty in an active, innocent, and well-ſpent life.

He had been ſeven years a captive in Arabia in the hands of the Moors, and nineteen years miſſionary in Abyſſinia, in the worſt of times, and had always extricated himſelf from the moſt perilous ſituations, with honour to himſelf and advantage to his religion. In perſon, he was very tall and ſtrong; but lean from continual labour and abſtinence. He was red faced; which, Tellez ſays, proceeded from the religious *warmth* of his heart. He had a very good underſtanding,

ſtanding, which he had cultivated, every hour of his life, by ſtudy or practice.

Besides poſſeſſing univerſal knowledge in ſcholaſtic divinity, and the books belonging to his profeſſion, he underſtood Greek, Latin, and Arabic well, was a good mathematician, an excellent mechanic, wrought always with his own hands, and in building was at once a careful, active labourer, and an architect of refined taſte and judgment. He was, by his own ſtudy and induſtry, painter, maſon, carver, carpenter, ſmith, farrier, quarrier, and was able to build convents and palaces, and furniſh them without calling one workman to his aſſiſtance; and in this manner he is ſaid to have furniſhed the convent at Collela, as alſo the palace and convent at Gorgora.

With all theſe accompliſhments, he was ſo affable, compaſſionate, and humble in his nature, that he never had opportunity of converſing, even with heretics, without leaving them his friends. He was remarkably chearful in his temper; and the moſt forward always in promoting innocent mirth, of that puerile ſpecies which we in England call *fun*, in great requeſt among the young men in Abyſſinia, who ſpend much of their time in this ſort of converſation, whether in the city or the camp. Above all, he was a patient, diligent inſtructor of youth; and the greateſt part of his diſciples died in the perſecution that ſoon followed, reſolutely maintaining the truths of that religion their preceptor firſt had taught them. In a word, he was the hinge upon which the Catholic religion turned. He had found the ſeeds of it ſown in the country for a hundred years before his time, which had borne little fruit, and was then apparently on

the decline. Nineteen years of this moſt active miſſionary, and the death of three kings, had advanced it only ſo far as to be embraced publicly by one of them; after Paez's death, in ſix years it fell, though ſupported moſt ſtrenuouſly by a king prodigal of the blood of his ſubjects in this cauſe, by a patriarch ſent from Rome, and by above 20 very zealous and active miſſionaries; and, as far as my foreſight can carry me, it is ſo entirely fallen, that, unleſs by a ſpecial miracle of Providence wrought for that purpoſe, it never will riſe again.

The king's renunciation of the Alexandrian faith was followed by a very ſtrong, or rather violent manifeſto, and we need not be at a loſs to gueſs whom he employed to draw it up. It begins by aſſerting the ſupremacy of the church of Rome, as the ſee of St Peter; it mentions the three firſt general councils, which condemned Arius, Macedonius, and Neſtorius; next quotes the council of Chalcedon, as the fourth general council, as having juſtly condemned Dioſcurus; but ſays not a word of the council of Epheſus, which the Abyſſinians receive inſtead of that of Chalcedon; inſiſts largely upon the two natures in Chriſt; then, leaving the patriarchs of Alexandria, it attacks not the doctrine, but the morals of the Abunas, ſent from Alexandria into Abyſſinia, accuſes the eccleſiaſtics in general of ſimony and paying money to the Abuna for their ordination, (a well-founded part of the charge) which I fear continues to this day.

The Abuna Marcus was, it is there ſaid, convicted by Socinios, or Melec Segued, of a crime of ſuch turpitude that the name of it ſhould never ſtain paper. He was degraded and baniſhed to the iſland of Dek. His ſucceſſor Chriſtodulus had

had many concubines. Abuna Petros, who ſucceeded, took the wife of a poor Egyptian, and lived with her; he then excommunicated his ſovereign Jacob, after he had reigned ſeven years, and died in battle in the actual commiſſion of treaſon, fighting againſt the prince.

Simon, the laſt Abuna, beſides living in adultery with the wife of an Egyptian called Matti, kept ſeveral young women with him as concubines; and being detected in having a daughter by one of them, with a view to conceal it, he cauſed the child to be expoſed to be devoured by the hyæna. After living in conſtant diſobedience to God's law, he joined the crime of rebellion to the repeated breach of every command in the decalogue; and appearing in battle, and excommunicating his ſovereign, God (ſays the manifeſto) delivered him into our victorious hands, and he was ſlain by a common ſoldier in the very commiſſion of his crime.

It muſt be owned, we cannot have a worſe picture of any Chriſtian church than that here given of the biſhop's church of Alexandria. Charity ſhould induce us to hope ſome exaggeration had crept into it. Yet when we conſider that the facts mentioned were all within the ſpace of forty years, and conſequently muſt have been within the knowledge, not only of Socinios, but of many people then alive and at court, we cannot, with the impartiality of an hiſtorian, deny our apprehenſions, that theſe charges were but too-well founded.

However this may be, neither the king's example, nor his manifeſto, had the effect he deſired. A rebel, whom the annals call the ſon of Gabriel, declared himſelf againſt the king in Amhara, juſt at the time that Socinios, miſled by

the enemies of Sela Chriſtos, had begun to entertain ſuſpicion of his loyalty, and had deprived him of the government of Gojam and the Agows. Finding, after an examination, there was no perſon that was qualified to bring this affair to a happy iſſue but Sela Chriſtos, he replaced him in his government of Gojam, giving him, at the ſame time, orders to march againſt the ſon of Gabriel into Amhara.

This command of the king, Ras Sela Chriſtos ſoon complied with, and, upon his firſt appearance in that province, the rebel retired to a high mountain which he made his place of arms, the top producing both proviſions and water ſufficent to maintain a large garriſon.

The Ras, ſeeing that force availed nothing, had recourſe to the uſual trap theſe rebels fall into. Weary of confinement on the mountain, ſenſible that he was by himſelf too weak to leave it, while ſuch an enemy expected him below, he accepted the friendſhip of the neighbouring Galla, who offered to join him in ſuch numbers as to enable him to deſcend from the mountain, and try his fortune in a battle. The treaty was concluded, and the junction no ſooner effected, than the faithleſs Galla, before gained by the Ras, fell upon the ſon of Gabriel with their clubs, and killed him on the ſpot, having ſo mangled his body that ſcarce a piece was reſerved to ſend to his enemy.

The joy this victory occaſioned at court met with a great addition by the arrival of the Romiſh patriarch. It has been before obſerved, that the king had himſelf wrote letters to the pope and king of Spain, declaring his intentions to turn Catholic. Peter Paez, Antonio Fernandes, and the other

prieſts, had given a much more favourable proſpect of religious affairs than had as yet been conveyed to Rome; the wiſer part of the conclave, however, had doubted. But now, the king had voluntarily made his recantation, it was no longer thought time for delay, and accordingly Alphonſo Mendez, a Jeſuit doctor of divinity, a man of great learning, by birth a Portugueſe, was ordained at Liſbon the 25th of May 1624.

From thence he proceeded to India by the way of Goa, attended by ſeveral freſh miſſionaries; and finding there letters from Socinios, and a paſſport from the king of Dancali, a Mahometan prince in alliance with the Abyſſinians, he arrived at Bilur, an open bay in the ſmall and barren ſtate of Dancali, on the ſecond of May 1625, and was received, by the brother of the reigning prince, with every token of friendſhip that ſo poor a ſtate and ſovereign could afford; the king of Dancali himſelf was at the diſtance of ſix days journey, in a place where there was greater plenty of water and proviſions. The following day the king ſent four mules for the fathers to join him, and received them in a room of a round figure, ſurrounded and covered with bundles of ſtraw, but ſo low they ſcarce could raiſe themſelves after having made their bows.

In this miſerable kingdom, which I ſhall not deſcribe, as, ſince that period, it has been conquered by the Galla, the patriarch and fathers ſtaid almoſt in want of neceſſaries for ſixteen days. At laſt they ſet out, having, with much difficulty, muſtered ſufficient beaſts of burden to carry their baggage. The road lay through part of the country wherein are the mines of foſſile-ſalt, hot, barren, and abſolutely without

without water, and expoſed greatly to the incurſions of the Galla. After two days journey, they arrived in the morning of the third, at the foot of Senaffé, where there was water. It is the frontier (as the name imports) of the province of Enderta, now united to the government of Tigré. It is part of that ridge of mountains which ſeparates the ſeaſons, occaſioning ſummer on the one ſide, while rain and cold prevail on the other.

On the night before they came to the mountain, while dubious of their way, a ſtar of more than ordinary magnitude, and of ſurpriſing brightneſs, appeared over the patriarch, giving ſo ſtrong a light that it illuminated the heavens down to the horizon. It was not, in its place or manner of appearing, like a common ſtar, but ſtood ſtationary, in the way leading to Senaffé, for above ſix minutes, and diſappeared *. This ſtar, the patriarch and his followers modeſtly ſay, was probably the ſame that conducted the Magi to the cradle of Chriſt, and was now ſent to ſhew them the way into Abyſſinia.

While they were at the foot of this mountain, the Muleteers, all Mahometans, thought the occaſion a proper one to plunder them, by obliging them to pay an additional hire for their beaſts, which they pretended were not able to aſcend ſo ſteep a mountain. The camels certainly could not paſs; but mules and aſſes have a more practicable road, for the ſake of carrying the ſalt. They inſiſted to leave the company till they ſhould bring them freſh mules. The caravan conſiſted of the patriarch and ſix eccleſiaſtics, prieſts, and friars, and thirteen laymen, three of whom were muſicians.

* Tellez, lib. iv. cap. 38.

cians. It was very probably their intention to have ſent to them people who would very ſoon have put a fatal period to the miſſion, had not Emanuel Baradas, with a number of Abyſſinians, and officers, and plenty of all things neceſſary, joined the patriarch on the 16th of June 1625; while their late conductors, conſcious of miſbehaviour, fled without ſeeking their hire.

In five days they came to Fremona, where they ſtaid till November; and, in December, arrived at Gorgora, where they were introduced to the king in his palace. Socinios ordered the patriarch to be placed on a ſeat equal in height to his own, on his right hand; and at that very audience, which was on the 11th of February 1626, it was ſettled that the king ſhould take an oath of ſubmiſſion to the ſee of Rome.

This uſeleſs, vain, ridiculous ceremony, was accordingly celebrated on the 11th of February, with all the pageantry of a heathen feſtival or triumph. The palace was adorned with all the pomp and vanity that the church of Rome, and eſpecially that part of it, the Order of the Jeſuits, had ſolemnly abjured. The patriarch, as a mark of his ſuperiority over the Abunas, preached a ſermon in the Portugueſe language upon the primacy of the chair of St Peter, full of Latin quotations, which is ſaid to have had a wonderful effect upon the king and Sela Chriſtos, neither of whom underſtood one word either of Latin or Portugueſe.

That part of the patriarch's diſcourſe, which was applicable to Socinios's converſion, was anſwered by Melca Chriſtos, governor of Samen, (himſelf a ſchiſmatic) in the language of Amhara, which neither the patriarch nor his re-

tinue underſtood, and concluded with theſe words, "That as the king thought himſelf obliged to fulfil thoſe promiſes of ſubmitting himſelf to the ſee of Rome which his predeceſſors had made, the time was now come in which he ſhould do that, if ſuch was his pleaſure. Theſe laſt words of the orator ſeem not to have ſatisfied the zeal of Socinios. He interrupted Melca Chriſtos by ſaying, that it was not now, but a long time ſince, that he had ſubmitted to the church of Rome, as true ſucceſſor of St Peter; and the preſent occaſion was only a confirmation of what he had formerly profeſſed."

The patriarch anſwered by a few words, prudently and ſenſibly, I ſuppoſe to ſave time, ſeeing that, ſhort or long, his diſcourſe would not be underſtood. But proceeding to facts, he opened a new teſtament, while Socinios, upon his knees, took the following oath: "We, ſultan Segued, emperor of Ethiopia, do believe and confeſs that St Peter, prince of the apoſtles, was conſtituted, by Chriſt our Lord, head of the whole Chriſtian church, and that he gave him the principality and dominion over the whole world, by ſaying to him, *You are Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church; and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.* And again when he ſaid, *Keep my ſheep.* Alſo we believe and confeſs, that the pope of Rome, lawfully elected, is the true ſucceſſor of St Peter the apoſtle, in government; that he holdeth the ſame power, dignity, and primacy, in the whole Chriſtian church: and to the holy father Urban VIII. of that name, by the mercy of God, pope, and our lord, and to his ſucceſſor in the government of the church, we do promiſe, offer, and ſwear true obedience, and ſubject, with humility at his feet, our perſon and empire: ſo help us God and theſe holy goſpels

goſpels before us."—After this, each man ſwore perſonal obedience, officers, prieſts, and monks, according to their ſeveral orders or conditions.

The prince royal Facilidas, purely and ſimply in the form preſcribed, took this oath, without any addition or alteration. But Ras Sela Chriſtos, heated with zeal, after repeating the formula, drawing his ſword in violent paſſion, uttered theſe words, "What has paſſed let it be paſt; but, from this day forward, he that falls from his duty this ſhall be his judge*."

This haſty ſpeech, not well underſtood, was thought by ſome to reflect on thoſe he had diſcovered to be in the confederacy with the rebel ſon of Gabriel. As the court was full of parties and diſcontent, every one applied the threat to himſelf, and all joined in a league to undo Sela Chriſtos, who had ſo wantonly declared himſelf the leader and champion of perſecution.

To this oath of obedience to the pope, he likewiſe added one to the king, and to the prince his ſucceſſor, Facilidas, with a ſtrange clauſe, or qualification, which made what he ſaid formerly ſtill worſe:—"I likewiſe ſwear to the prince, as heir of his father in this empire, as long as he ſhall hold favour, and defend the holy Catholic faith; and if he ſhall fail in this, I hereby ſwear to be his greateſt enemy." This extravagant addition he inſiſted ſhould be impoſed upon all the officers of ſtate, and of the army then at court, and

* It is apparently a ſpeech in a paſſion, for this Sela Chriſtos was one of the moſt learned of the Abyſſinians; yet the words themſelves, if literally tranſlated, are ſcarcely intelligible.

therefore did moſt deſervedly ſeal his own condemnation and puniſhment, which overtook him in the end, though it did not follow till long afterwards.

To theſe violent proceedings were added others ſtill more violent. A ſolemn excommunication was pronounced againſt all ſuch as did not keep that oath, and a proclamation was forthwith made, "That all people, in the line of being ordained prieſts, ſhould firſt embrace the Catholic religion upon pain of death; that all ſhould obſerve the form of the church of Rome in the celebration of Eaſter and Lent, under the ſame penalty; and with that the ceremonies of the day ended.

Tempus erit cum magno optaverit emptum,
Intactum Pallanta.

It was a day ever to be marked with black, not only in the annals of Ethiopia, but in thoſe of Rome.

Although the arrival of the patriarch at Bilur had been happily effected, both as to himſelf and thoſe that attended him, it was not ſo with ſome of his brethren ſent to aſſiſt him in that miſſion. Two Jeſuits, Franciſco Machado and Bernard Pereira, had received the king's letters in India for their ſafe conduct to Bilur in Dancali. Whether by malice, or inadvertency, the king's ſecretary, inſtead of Bilur, had mentioned Zeyla in the letter.

Zeyla, an iſland belonging to the king of Adel, was of all other places that where the people were moſt inveterate againſt the Catholic religion. No ſooner did the Shekh know

the quality and errand of theſe miſſionaries, than he confined them to cloſe priſon, where, after great ſuffering, they were both put to death; and, to aggravate this, a letter was written to Socinios ſtigmatizing him with the name of apoſtate from the religion of his forefathers, and applying to him many opprobrious names.

This letter, at another time, would not have failed to have been followed by the chaſtiſement it deſerved. But Adel, formerly a flouriſhing and commercial kingdom, was now fallen, and reduced to a multitude of banditti. Trade had left it. A garriſon of nominal janizaries, ſince the reign of Sultan Selim, had kept the little iſland of Zeyla for the pretended purpoſe of a cuſtomhouſe; but, in fact, it was a poſt of robbers, who only maintained themſelves there for the ſake of plundering merchants who came by ſea; while the Galla poured in numbers upon the prince from the continent, and of the ancient kingdom of Adel, had left him nothing but Auſſa the capital, a town ſituated upon a rock, on the banks of the river Hawaſh, Azab, and Raheeta, and a few other miſerable villages upon the ſea; and even part of theſe were daily falling into the hands of that enemy, deſtined very ſoon to over-run them all. This abject ſtate to which they had been reduced, we may ſuppoſe, was the only reaſon that protected them from the vengeance of a high-ſpirited prince, ſuch as Socinios certainly was.

This violent conduct of Socinios in his abjuration was followed by that of the patriarch Alphonſo Mendes, perfectly in the ſame ſpirit. The clergy were re-ordained, their churches conſecrated anew, grown men as well as children again baptiſed, the moveable feaſts and feſtivals reduced to

the forms and times of the church of Rome; circumcision, polygamy, and divorce were abrogated for ever; and the many questions that thereupon arose, and which were understood to belong to the civil judge, the patriarch called to his own tribunal exclusively.

All the tenets of the church of Alexandria, whether of faith or discipline, were rejected; and it was not known how far the patriarch intended to subject the civil jurisdiction of the judges to the ecclesiastical power. Two steps that he took, the one immediately after the other, seemed to give great reason of fear upon this head.

In order to understand the first of these cases, it will be necessary to know, that it is a fundamental constitution of the monarchy of Ethiopia, that all lands belong to the king; and that there is no such thing as church-lands in this country. Those that the king has given for the maintenance of churches or monasteries are resumed every day, at the instance of, and for the convenience of individuals, and new ones granted in their stead sometimes of a greater value, sometimes of a less. Nor have the priests or monks any property in these lands. A lay-officer, appointed by the king, divides to each monk or priest, his quota of the revenue, applying any overplus to other uses, which is, we may suppose, often putting it into his own pocket.

There was a nobleman of great distinction for his family and rank at court, for his age, and the merit of his service; he had occupied some of the lands belonging to a monk who happened to be a Catholic. This man, had he been an Alexandrian, could have had no recourse to the Abuna his patri-

patriarch, and the cauſe muſt have been tried before the civil judge. But Mendes was of another opinion. He ordered the nobleman to make his defence before the eccleſiaſtical tribunal; and, upon his refuſing this as a novelty to which he was not bound, he condemned him immediately to reſtore the lands to the monk. This, too, was refuſed on the part of the preſent poſſeſſor, who being one day attending the king at church, the patriarch, without preamble, pronounced againſt him a formal ſentence of excommunication, by which he gave him over, ſoul and body, to the devil.

Such procedure was, till then, unknown in Abyſſinia. The nobleman, though otherwiſe brave, was ſo much affected with the terms of his ſentence as to faint, imagining himſelf already in the clutches of Satan, and it was with difficulty he was recovered, the king making interceſſion with the patriarch to take off this cenſure, or rather this curſe.

Sudden as it was, however, in the inflicting, and eaſy in the removal, it made very laſting and ſerious impreſſions on the minds of men of all ranks, greatly to the diſadvantage of the patriarch and the profeſſors of his new religion, in the exerciſe of which they did not diſcover that degree of charity, meekneſs, mercy, and long-ſuffering, that they had been taught were the very eſſentials of it.

The next inſtance was this: There had been an Itchegué, that is, the ſuperior of the monks of Debra Libanos, an Order inſtituted by Abba Tecla Haimanout, the laſt Abyſſinian Abuna, not more celebrated by the church than the ſtate,

as being the reſtorer of the line of Solomon, for many years baniſhed to Shoa; and this ſuperior, beſides the dignity of his office, was remarkable for an innocent, pious, and holy life. It happened that a Catholic monk officiated in a church where this Itcheguè had been buried under the altar; the patriarch declared the church defiled by the burial of that heretic and ſchiſmatic, and ſuſpended the celebration of divine ſervice till the body was raiſed and thrown out of the church in a moſt indecent manner. Univerſal diſcontent ſeized the minds of all men; and, from that time, it ſeemed the friends of the old religion began again to recover ſtrength, and the Catholics to be looked upon, if not with hatred, yet with terror. And every trifle now contributed towards the one or the other.

The Jeſuits, following practices or cuſtoms of their own, had thought fit to exhibit a kind of religious plays or farces. The devil in theſe pieces is always the buffoon; he plays harlequin and ſlight-of-hand tricks, fires ſquibs and gun-powder, very little conſiſtent with the decency of the other perſons who compoſe the drama. This continued to be practiſed in ſeveral Catholic countries in Europe, while that learned company exiſted*. It happened to be neceſſary to introduce figures of this kind blacked all over, and in maſks, with cloven feet, &c. The firſt exhibition of theſe figures ſo ſurpriſed and terrified the Abyſſinian audience, that they fled immediately upon their appearance, crying out, Alas! alas! theſe Franks have brought devils into our country with them!

This

* I have ſeen them often at Madrid.

This great extenſion of civil juriſdiction, and the large ſtrides it took to annihilate the civil power, the encroachments it made upon the prerogative of the king, till now ſupreme in all cauſes eccleſiaſtical and civil, the more than regal, the more, if poſſible, than papal pride of the patriarch, began to be felt univerſally, and it was ſeen to be intended to leſſen every order of government, from the king to the loweſt officer in the province. From this time, therefore, we date the decline of the Catholic intereſt in Abyſſinia. The firſt blow was given it by the king himſelf, not with a view to deſtroy it, for he was a ſincere Catholic upon principle, but to controul and keep it within ſome bounds, as he found there was no order could otherwiſe be maintained.

He deſired the patriarch to permit the uſe of the ancient liturgies of Ethiopia, altered by himſelf in every thing where they did not agree with that of the church of Rome. With this the patriarch was obliged to comply, becauſe there was in it an appearance of reaſon that men ſhould pray to God in a language that they underſtood, and which was their own, rather than a foreign tongue of which they did not underſtand one word. This was thought ſo obvious in Ethiopia as not to admit any doubt. But the order and practice of the church of Rome was juſt the contrary; and this wound was a mortal one; for no ſooner was the permiſſion given to uſe their own liturgies, than all the Abyſſinians embraced them to a man, and went on in their old prayers and ſervices without any of the patriarch's alterations.

To

To theſe events, not important in themſelves, but only from the effect they had upon the minds of mankind, ſucceeded tragedies of a more ſerious nature. I have already obſerved, in ſpeaking of the Galla, that they were divided into three principal diviſions, thoſe on the eaſt of Abyſſinia were called Bertuma Galla, thoſe on the ſouth called Toluma, and thoſe on the weſt Boren Galla; each of theſe were divided into ſeven, and theſe again ſubdivided into a number of tribes. Each of theſe ſeven nations chooſe a king once in ſeven years called Lubo; and it is uſually the firſt act of the new king's reign to over-run the neighbouring provinces of Abyſſinia, laying every thing waſte with fire and ſword for this year, even if they had no provocation, but had been at peace for ſeveral years before.

The Abyſſinians remained long in ignorance of this cauſe of theſe invaſions, and, while that was the caſe, they could take no meaſures to be prepared againſt, and reſiſt them. But after, when the cuſtoms of the Galla were better known, their periodical invaſions were watched and provided againſt, ſo that though they were ſtill continued, they were generally repelled with the ſlaughter and defeat of the invaders.

It happened that the preſent year, 1627, was the ſeaſon of electing the king, and of the invaſion. Though the time of the expedition was known, no intelligence had been given of the manner in which it was to be executed. In paſt times, the nations, or tribes of Galla, aſſaulted each the oppoſite province in whoſe frontiers they were ſettled; but this year it was agreed among them to chooſe one province, Gojam, which, by uniting their whole force, they were

were to devote to deſtruction, or, if poſſible, keep poſſeſſion of it.

Buco was governor of Gojam; the king had ſent Sela Chriſtos to his aſſiſtance, and was intending to follow with another army himſelf. In the mean time, the paſſes through which the Galla uſed to enter were all lined with men, and every preparation made to receive them.

These barbarians advanced to the Nile in multitudes never ſeen before; and, finding the province perfectly on its guard, they feigned a panic, or diſagreement among themſelves, retired in ſeeming confuſion, and diſperſed, ſome, as it was ſaid, to their own homes, and ſome to an expedition againſt Narea. This in reality had often happened; but now it was only a ſtratagem; for they all aſſembled in their own country Bizamo, of which the Abyſſinians had no intelligence. Buco, thinking he was free of them for that year, diſbanded his troops, or detached them to other ſervices; Sela Chriſtos did the ſame; neither did Socinios advance with his army.

In that interval of weakneſs, news were ſent to Buco that the Galla had paſſed the Nile. Upon which he advanced with 1000 foot and 200 horſe, believing that it was ſome ſmall part of that army which he thought had ſome time before been diſperſed. After hearing maſs with great devotion, and receiving the ſacrament, in paſſing through a thick wood he was aſſaulted by the Galla. Being a man, brave in his own perſon, and exceedingly well-trained to arms, he fought ſo ſucceſsfully, and ſo encouraged his men by his example, that he cut that body of Galla entirely

tirely to pieces; and, as he thought the whole matter then at an end, he ordered his drums to beat, and his trumpets to ſound, in token of victory.

The reſt of the Galla, who were now diſperſed through the province, but at no great diſtance, burning and deſtroying, as their cuſtom is, and who left this body behind them only to ſecure their retreat acroſs the river, returned all to their colours, upon hearing the drums and trumpets of Kaſmati Buco, whom they did not know to be ſo near; and, as ſoon as he came in ſight, deſpiſing his ſmall number, they ſurrounded them on every ſide. Buco immediately ſaw that he was a loſt man; but, conſidering the multitude of the enemy, and the unprepared ſtate of the province, he thought his own life and thoſe of his followers could not be better employed than by obſtinately fighting to diſable the enemy, ſo as to put it out of their power to purſue the ruin of the country further; throwing himſelf furiouſly into the thickeſt of the Galla, he, at firſt onſet, killed four of the moſt forward of their leaders, and made himſelf a lane through the troops oppoſing him; and he was now got without their circle, when ſome of his officers ſeeing him, cried to him to make the beſt of his way, as affairs were deſperate, and not to add by his death to the misfortunes of that day.

Upon this he pauſed, as recollecting himſelf for a moment; but, diſdaining to ſurvive the loſs of his army, he threw himſelf again among the Galla, where his men were ſtill fighting, carrying victory wherever he went. His horſe was at laſt wounded, and, being otherwiſe young and untrained, became ungovernable. It was neceſſary to quit him, when, drawing his ſword, and leaping upon the ground, he

continued

continued the fight with the ſame degree of courage, till the Galla, who did not dare to approach him near, killed him by a number of javelins thrown at a diſtance.

The news of the defeat and death of Buco reached Sela Chriſtos, then in march to join him; nor did the misfortune that had already happened, nor the bad proſpect of his own ſituation, alter his reſolution of attacking the enemy: But he firſt wrote to the king his brother, telling him his ſituation, and the probable conſequences of doing his duty as he had determined, laying all the blame upon the malice of his enemies, who, to gratify their own private malice, had left him without aſſiſtance, and occaſioned misfortunes ſo detrimental to the common-weal.

Sela Christos paſſed this night upon a riſing ground, and in the morning early deſcended into the plain, with a view of attacking the Galla, when, to his great ſurpriſe, that barbarous people, content with the ſlaughter of Kaſmati Buco and his army, and not willing to riſk a large quantity of plunder with which their whole army was loaded, had repaſſed the Nile, and returned home.

Tecla Georgis was ſon-in-law to Socinios, and then governor of Tigré, but at variance with his father-in-law upon ſome quarrel with his wife. Determined on this account to rebel, he aſſociated with ſome noblemen of the firſt rank and power in Tigré, particularly Guebra Mariam and John Akayo, declaring to them, that he would no longer ſuffer the Roman religion, but defend the ancient church of Alexandria to the utmoſt of his power. And, to convince all the Abyſſinians of his ſincerity, he tore off the figures of

crucifixes, and all church-ornaments and images of ſaints that were in relief, and burned them publicly, to make his reconciliation with the king impoſſible. He then called before him Abba Jacob his Catholic chaplain, and, having ſtripped him of his pontificals, killed him with his own hand. There was no method he could deviſe of bringing his quarrel ſooner to an iſſue than this which he had adopted. But he did not ſeem to have taken equal pains to provide for his defence, as he had done to give provocation.

Socinios, upon the firſt intelligence of this murder and treaſon, ordered Keba Chriſtos to march againſt him with the troops that he had at hand. This general, equally a good ſoldier, ſubject, and Catholic, being convinced of the neceſſity of puniſhing ſpeedily ſo monſtrous a crime, paſſed by forced marches through Siré to Axum, thence to Fremona; and, having appointed Gaſpar Paez to meet him there, he confeſſed himſelf, and received the ſacrament from that Jeſuit's hands. From Fremona he continued with the ſame ſpeed, making three ordinary days marches in one, being deſirous of preventing the poſſibility of Tecla Georgis's collecting troops, and taking refuge on a mountain called *Maſba*, which he heard to be his deſign.

It was the 12th of December 1628 that news were brought him of the ſituation of the enemy; upon which he ordered his baggage to be left behind, and every ſoldier to carry two loaves, and to march without reſting till he came up with Tecla Georgis.

In the morning of the day following, two horſemen, on the ſcout before him, diſcovered five of the rebel ſoldiers upon

upon the look-out likewiſe. Theſe, upon ſeeing Keba Chriſtos's horſemen, returned immediately to their maſter, and told him that they had ſeen armed men, and conceived them to be the ſoldiers of Keba Chriſtos. To this intelligence Tecla Georgis anſwered, That Keba Chriſtos was in the king's palace at Dancaz the 15th of November, and that it was impoſſible he then could be ſo near with an army, if he had even wings to fly; but that the men they had ſeen were probably reinforcements that he expected.

Keba Christos, on the contrary, hearing that the enemy was at hand, drew up his army in three diviſions. The firſt conſiſted of his own houſehold, the ſecond of a body of horſe of the king's houſehold, called *the Koccob Horſe*, or *Star Cavalry*, from a ſilver ſtar which each of them wears on the front of his helmet; and the third, of the people of Tigré who had joined him. In this order he came in ſight of his enemy poſted upon a ſmall height, divided only from him by a narrow plain. Tecla Georgis, convinced now that it was Keba Chriſtos, formed his army into two diviſions; the one compoſed of a body called *Tcheraguas*, the other of a body called *Sultan ba Chriſtos*; with theſe was a large corps of Galla which had lately joined them.

Keba Christos, now turning to his troops, briefly ſaid, "My children, I will not waſte my time nor yours in diſcourſe, or in telling you what you are to do. You have all arms in your hands; you are good Chriſtians; and I can poſitively aſſure you there is not before you one of your enemies that is not alſo an enemy to Chriſt." Then, placing himſelf before the Koccob horſe, he pulled off his helmet and gave it to his ſervant, ſaying, "By my naked face you ſhall

ſhall know me to-day, that I am not going in the midſt of you as general or commander, but foot for foot along with you like a common ſoldier."

Upon having uncovered his head, he was quickly known by Tecla Georgis, from whoſe troops a number of muſkets was fired at him. But this had ſo little effect upon this gallant officer, that, changing his place, (which then was at the head of the ſecond diviſion) he placed himſelf ſtill nearer the enemy in the front of his own houſehold troops, which were the firſt; and the Galla charging them in that inſtant, he ſlew their leader with his own hand. Upon the death of their commander, theſe barbarians immediately fled, as is their cuſtom, while Keba Chriſtos endeavoured to make his way to where Tecla Georgis was employed keeping his troops from following ſo bad an example. But ſo ſoon as that rebel ſaw his enemy approach him, he and his whole army joined the Galla in their flight; tho' he narrowly eſcaped, by the ſwiftneſs of his horſe, a light javelin, thrown by Keba Chriſtos, which ſtruck him behind, but ſo feebly, by reaſon of the diſtance, that it did not pierce his armour.

The king's troops purſued vigorouſly, and ſoon brought to their general the mule, the ſword, and helmet of Tecla Georgis, with the heads of 300 ſlain in the battle, moſt of them Gallas, and with them 12 heads of the moſt turbulent rebellious monks of Tigré. With theſe they alſo brought Adera, ſiſter to Tecla Georgis, wounded in the throat, who had inſtigated him very ſtrongly to commit the violences againſt the profeſſors of the Catholic religion. Tafa, too, his maſter of the houſehold, was taken priſoner; and it being made known to Keba Chriſtos that this man had aſ-

ſiſted at the murder of Abba Jacob, he ordered him directly to be put to death.

Tecla Georgis, aided by the ſtrength of his horſe and knowledge of the country, eſcaped and concealed himſelf from his purſuers for four days; but, on the Saturday that followed the victory, he was found in a cavern with his great confidents, Woldo Mariam, and a ſchiſmatic monk whoſe name was Sebo Amlac. Tecla Georgis was carried alive to Keba Chriſtos, who ſent him to the king, his two companions being ſlain as ſoon as found, and their heads accompanied their living maſter, which, on their arrival at Dancaz, the king ordered to be hung upon a tree.

Tecla Georgis being convicted of ſacrilege as well as murder, having burnt the crucifixes and images of the ſaints, was condemned to be burnt alive, and a lime-kiln was immediately prepared in which he was to ſuffer. Upon hearing this, he deſired a Catholic confeſſor, as wiſhing to be reconciled to the church of Rome, and for this purpoſe he ſent a requeſt to the patriarch, who was at three leagues diſtance, and who diſpatched Antonio Fernandes with full powers to abſolve from all manner of ſins, and at the ſame time gave him orders to intercede ſtrongly with the king to pardon the criminal. Tecla Georgis confeſſed publicly at the door of the church, and abjured the errors of the church of Alexandria.

After this, the father Fernandes applied to the king, pleading ſtrongly for his pardon. To which the king anſwered, "Many reaſons there are why I ſhould deſire to pardon Tecla Georgis. To ſay no more, he has been married

ried to two of my daughters, and he has by them two ſons, both good ſoldiers and horſemen, who actually ride before me, and accompany me in battle. I have therefore pardoned him all the affronts and injuries he has done to me. But, were I to take upon myſelf to pardon the affronts and inſults he has offered the Divine Majeſty, I ſhould turn the puniſhment of his ſins upon myſelf, my family, and kingdom; and, therefore, I refuſe your petition, and order you to return forthwith to Gorgora."

After the departure of the father, in conſideration that Tecla Georgis had again embraced the Catholic religion, the king altered his ſentence of being burnt, into that of being hanged privately in the houſe where he was then in priſon; and, for that purpoſe, the executioner had brought with him the cord with which Tecla had ordered the feet of Abba Jacob to be tied. No ſooner did he perceive that there were no hopes of pardon, by their beginning to tie his hands, than he again, with a loud voice, renounced his confeſſion, declaring that he died an Alexandrian, and that there was but one nature in Chriſt. The executioner endeavoured to ſtop his further blaſphemies, by drawing him up on the beam in the room; but he reſiſted ſo ſtrongly, that there was time to inform Socinios of his abjuration: upon which the king ordered that he ſhould be hanged publicly upon a pine-tree; and he was accordingly taken down, half-ſtrangled, from the beam in the houſe, and hung upon the tree before the palace.

Adera, his ſiſter, was next examined; and it being clearly proved that ſhe had been a very active agent in the murder of Abba Jacob, ſhe likewiſe was condemned to be hang-

ed upon the ſame tree with her brother, fifteen days afterwards.

All that interval, the queen and ladies at court employed their utmoſt intereſt with the king to pardon Adera, for they looked upon it as a diſgraceful thing, both to their ſex and quality, that a woman of her family ſhould be thus publicly executed. All the ladies of the court having joined, therefore, in a public petition to the king while on his throne, he is ſaid to have anſwered them by the following ſhort parable:—

"There was once an old woman, who being told of the death of an infant, ſaid, with great indifference, Children are but tender; it is no wonder that they die, for any thing will kill a child. Being told of a youth dying, ſhe obſerved, Young people are forward and raſh; they are always in the way of ſome diſaſter; no wonder they die; it is impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe. But being told an old woman was dead, ſhe began to tear her hair, and lament, crying, Now the world is at an end if old women begin to die, fearing that her turn might be the next. In this manner all of you have ſeen Tecla Georgis die, and alſo ſeveral of his companions, and you have not ſaid a word. But now it is come to the hanging of one woman, you are all alarmed, and the world is at an end. Do not then deceive yourſelves, but be aſſured that the ſame cord which tied the feet of Abba Jacob, ſtill remains ſufficient to hang that ſow Adera, and all thoſe that ſhall be ſo wicked as to behave like her, to the diſgrace of your ſex, and their own rank and quality."

The effects of theſe oſtentatious acts of reformation ſoon produced conſequences which troubled their joy. The Agows of Laſta, called Tcheratz Agow, who live at the head of the Tacazzè, rebelled. The country they occupy is not extenſive, but exceedingly populous, and was ſuppoſed at that time to be able to bring into the field above 50,000 fighting men, beſides leaving behind a ſufficient number to defend the paſſes and ſtrong-holds of their country, which are by much the moſt difficult and inacceſſible of any in Abyſſinia. They are divided into five clans, Waag, Tettera, Dehaanah, Gouliou, and Louta, each having an independent chief. They are exceedingly warlike; and, though the country be ſo rude and rocky, they have a conſiderable number of good horſes; and are in general reckoned among the braveſt and moſt barbarous ſoldiers in Abyſſinia. Their province abounds with all ſorts of proviſions, and they rarely can be forced to pay any thing to government in the name of tax, or tribute.

Tecla Georgis was now dead, but the cauſe of the rebellion ſtill ſubſiſted. While governor of Begemder, he had connived at many abuſes of his officers who occupied the poſts neareſt to Laſta. Theſe being young men, from wantonneſs only, without provocation, had made many different inroads, driving away cattle, and committing many other exceſſes. The Agows carried their complaints to the governor, who, far from hearing or redreſſing their wrongs, juſtified the conduct of his officers, by making inroads himſelf immediately after; but coming to an action in perſon with that people, he was ſhamefully beat, and a great part of his army left dead upon the field.

This

This misfortune very much affected Socinios. Nor did the Agows themſelves doubt, but that a ſpeedy chaſtiſement was to follow this victory over Tecla Georgis.

There was a youth deſcended of the royal family, who, to preſerve the freedom of his perſon, lived among the Galla, in expectation of better times. His name was Melca Chriſtos. To him the Agows applied, that, with this prince of the houſe of Solomon at their head, they might wipe off the odium of being reputed rebels, and appear as fighting under a lawful ſovereign for reformation of abuſes. The renunciation of the Alexandrian faith, forcibly obtruded upon them by Socinios, ſerved as cauſe of complaint. The Roman Catholic writers in the hiſtory of this miſſion, ſay this was but a pretext, in which I conceive they are right. I have lived among the Agows of Laſta, and in intimacy with many of them, who are not, to this day, ſo anxious about Chriſtianity as to aſcend one of their hills for the difference between that and Paganiſm; and I am ſatisfied, for theſe 300 years laſt paſt there has been ſcarcely a common layman in Laſta that has known the diſtinction between the Alexandrian and the Roman church.

In the beginning of February 1629 the king marched from Dancaz towards Gojam, where he collected an army of 30,000 men, which, with the baggage, ſervants, and attendants, at that time very great and numerous, amounted to above 80,000 men.

Socinios detached a number of ſmall parties to enter Laſta at different places. On the other hand, Melca Chriſtos aſſembled his troops on the moſt inacceſſible rocks; whence,

when he ſpied occaſion, he came ſuddenly down and ſurpriſed the enemy below. Among all the rude, high, and tremendous mountains of which this country conſiſts, there is one eſpecially, called by the name of *Laſta*. It is in the territory of Waag, ſtrongly ſurrounded with inacceſſible precipices, having a large plain on the top, abounding with every thing neceſſary, and watered by a fine ſtream that never fails.

The manner in which the Agows remained ſecure in this ſtrong poſt was miſconſtrued into fear by the king's army, which, in two diviſions, advanced to the attack of the mountain. That on the right had with ſome difficulty ſcrambled up without oppoſition; but, being now arrived to the ſteep part of the rock, ſuch a number of large ſtones was rolled down upon them from above, that this diviſion of the army was entirely deſtroyed. The number of ſtones on the brink of the precipices was inexhauſtible; and, once put in motion, purſued the ſcattered troops with unavoidable ſpeed, even down to the plains below. Among the ſlain was Guebra Chriſtos, the king's ſon-in-law, daſhed to pieces by the fragment of a rock. The left diviſion was upon the point of ſuffering the ſame misfortune, had not Keba Chriſtos come to their relief and drawn them off, juſt before the enemy had begun to diſcharge this irreſiſtible artillery againſt them.

The king, thus ſhamefully beaten, retired to Dancaz, leaving the entrances from Laſta ſtrongly defended, leſt theſe mountaineers ſhould, by way of retaliation, fall upon the province of Begemder. But the late ill-fortune had diſpirited the troops, and cauſed an indifference about duty, a want

want of obedience, and a relaxation in diſcipline in the whole army. Each of the detachments, therefore, one after the other, left their poſt from different excuſes, and returned home. The bad conſequence of this was now experienced. The Agows entered Begemder ſpreading deſolation everywhere. Melca Chriſtos, no longer ſculking among the rocks of Laſta, planted his ſtandard upon the plain, within five days march of the capital where the king was reſiding.

The jealouſies that had ariſen between Socinios and his brother-in-law Sela Chriſtos, had been ſo much aggravated ſince the oath adminiſtered by the patriarch, that the king had again deprived him of Gojam, ſuffering him to live in obſcurity in Damot, and among the Agows, occupied, as the Jeſuits ſay, in the converſion of that Pagan people, by deſtroying their idols, which they repreſent to be a ſpecies of cane or bamboo *, and in forbidding the ceremonies of adoration and devotion, which at ſtated times they paid to the river.

No remedy could be propoſed, but the preſence of Sela Chriſtos, who, upon the firſt warning, joined the king, and coming ſuddenly upon the army of Laſta occupied in laying waſte the low country of Begemder, gave them ſuch an overthrow that ſufficiently compenſated the firſt loſs of the king, and forced them again to take refuge among their ſtrong-holds in Laſta.

A mis-

* Called by the Agows, Krihaha.

A MISFORTUNE of another kind followed this victory: Laeca Mariam, a near relation to the king, was appointed governor of Begemder; but no ſooner did he ſee himſelf veſted with that government, than he meditated ſhaking off his allegiance to Socinios.

THE king, after his laſt battle with the Agows, had named his ſon Facilidas commander in chief of his forces; and, to ſecure him a powerful and able aſſiſtant, he had firſt reſtored Sela Chriſtos to his government of Gojam, then ſent him with an army to join Facilidas, and command under him.

THE ſucceſs was anſwerable to the prudence of the meaſure; for, immediately upon their arrival, they obliged Laeca Mariam to ſeek for refuge in the mountains of Amhara, and, without giving him time to recollect himſelf there, forced their way to the mountain to which he had retired, and from which he and his followers had no way to eſcape, but by venturing down a ſteep precipice; in attempting this, Laeca Mariam fell, and was daſhed to pieces, as were many others of his followers; the reſt were ſlain by the army that purſued them.

AT this time, Facilidas began to attract the eyes of the nation in general. Beſides perſonal bravery, he had ſhewn great military talents in the former campaign of Laſta. Though young, he was in capacity and reſolution equal to his father, but leſs warm, more reſerved in his temper and diſcourſe. He was thought to be an enemy to the Catholic religion, becauſe he did not promote it, and neither exceeded nor fell ſhort of what his father commanded him. Yet,

he lived with the Jeſuits on ſuch an even footing, that they confeſs they did not know whether he was their friend or enemy: he kept one of their number, called Father Angelis, conſtantly in his houſehold, where he was much favoured, and conſtantly in his preſence. He was thought to be an enemy to Sela Chriſtos, though he never had ſhewn it.

Facilidas received a flattering meſſage from Urban VIII. but did not anſwer it; nor does it appear his father ever deſired him; for, through the whole courſe of the life of Sonios, as his enemies are forced to confeſs, he paid to his father's will, the moſt paſſive obedience in every thing. The tyranny, however, of church-government began to appear unmaſked; and it is probable that the king, though reſolved to die a Roman Catholic from principles of conſcience, was indifferent about forging for his ſon the chains he had himſelf worn with pain.

However this may be, the laſt ſtep of placing Facilidas at the head of the army was conſtrued as another ſtroke of humiliation to the Catholics, eſpecially as it was followed with the removal of Keba Chriſtos (the ſupport of that religion) from court, where he had been appointed Billetana Gueta. It is true he was removed by what, in other times, would have been called preferment; but things had now changed their qualities, and places were not eſtimated, as formerly, by the conſequence they gave in the empire, but by the opportunities they afforded of conſtant acceſs to the king, and occaſion of joining in councils with him, and defeating thoſe of their enemies.

Keba

KEBA CHRISTOS being ſent governor to Tigré, was to enter Laſta from that quarter on the N. E. He is ſaid to have received his appointment with a great degree of concern, and to have told his friends, that he foreſaw he never was to return from that expedition, which he did not regret, becauſe he was convinced, by living much longer, it would be made his duty to aſſiſt at the fall of the Catholic religion.

AFTER having performed his devotions at Fremona, this general advanced through Gouliou, a territory moſtly inhabited by Galla, and deſtitute of any ſort of proviſions; after which he took poſſeſſion of the mountains of Laſta, with a view to cover the march of the young prince Facilidas, whom he every day expected. But that prince not appearing in time, and proviſions becoming ſcarce, no meaſure remained but making his retreat to Tigré; and, although he formed the beſt diſpoſition for that purpoſe, the people of Laſta obſerving his intention in time, on his firſt movement attacked his rear-guard while he was deſcending the mountain, and put it to flight: being thereby maſters of the higher ground, they had the command of the cowardly ſoldiers below them, who could not inſure their deſtruction more certainly than by the indecent manner in which they were flying.

KEBA CHRISTOS, deſerted by all except a few ſervants, continued courageouſly fighting; and, although it was very poſſible for him to have eſcaped, he diſdained to ſurvive the loſs of his army. Receiving at that time a wound from a javelin, which paſſed through his belly, and judging the ſtroke to be mortal, he gave up all further reſiſtance, fell upon his knees to prayer, and was again wounded by a

ſtone, which ſtruck him to the ground. Two of the mountaineers immediately came up to him, one of whom did not know him, and contented himſelf with ſtripping the body; but the other remembering his face, cut his head off, and carried it to the rebel Melca Chriſtos.

The misfortune was followed by another in Gojam, great to the nation in general, and greater ſtill to the Catholic cauſe in particular. At the time that Sela Chriſtos was in Begemder with prince Facilidas, the Galla from Bizamo, ſuppoſing the province of Damot without defence, paſſed the Nile, laying the whole province waſte before them. Fecur Egzie, lieutenant-general under Sela Chriſtos, although he had with him only a ſmall number of troops, did not heſitate to march againſt thoſe ſavages, to endeavour, if poſſible, to ſtop their ravages. The Galla, ſurpriſed at this, thought it was Sela Chriſtos, and fled before him. He had now purſued them almoſt alone, and lighted in a low meadow to give graſs to his horſe, when he was ſurrounded and ſlain by a number of the enemy that lay hid among the buſhes, and diſcovered how ill he was attended.

He was reputed a man of the beſt underſtanding, and the moſt liberal ſentiments of any in Ethiopia; a great orator, excelling both in the gracefulneſs of manner and copiouſneſs and purity of his language. He was among the firſt that embraced the Catholic religion, even before the king or Sela Chriſtos, and was the principal promoter of the tranſlations of the Portugueſe books into Ethiopic, aſſiſted by the Jeſuit Antonio de Angelis. We have ſeen, in the year 1613, the great efforts he made in the embaſſy to India by the coaſt of Melinda. He was an excellent horſeman, but more violent

and raſh in battle than could have been expected from a man of ſuch mild manners.

THERE happened at this time another novelty. The king brought the patriarch from Gorgora to Dancaz this year, at Eaſter, to hear that feaſt celebrated, with the Ethiopic ſervice amended, of which we have already ſpoken abundantly. This countenance, ſo unneceſſarily given to an innovation that produced every day ſuch very bad effects to the Catholic intereſt, joined to many other circumſtances, ſeemed clearly to indicate a change in that prince's mind.

THE patriarch having made but a ſhort ſtay at Dancaz, it was currently reported a diſagreement had happened, and that the king had ſent him priſoner to Gorgora; and this falſe report affected greatly the weight the Catholics were ſuppoſed before to have had at court. But the tranſaction that followed was of a nature to promiſe much more conſequences.

SOCINIOS had a daughter called *Ozoro Wengelawit*, which means the Evangelical, a name ſhe certainly deſerved not from her manners. This lady was firſt married to Bela Chriſtos, a man of rank at court, from whom ſhe had been divorced. She was next married to another, and then (her two former huſbands being ſtill alive) to Tecla Georgis, who had before married her ſiſter, another of the king's daughters. During this marriage ſhe had openly lived in adultery with Za Chriſtos, who had been married to her ſiſter, a third daughter of the king. Za Chriſtos had been happy enough in preſerving this lady's eſteem longer than any other of her huſbands, and nothing would content her now but a mar-

riage

riage with her lover ſolemnly and publicly. For which purpoſe ſhe applied to the patriarch to diſpenſe with the affinity between her and Za Chriſtos, ariſing from his having been married before to her ſiſter.

It is not to be ſuppoſed that the patriarch would have reſiſted, if nothing had ſtood in the way except the affinity; but weighty impediments preſented themſelves beſides; for either the firſt marriage was valid, or it was not. If it was valid, then Wengelawit could not marry Za Chriſtos or any one elſe, becauſe her huſband was alive; nor could ſhe marry her ſecond, nor Tecla Georgis, her third. If the firſt marriage was not valid, then the ſecond was, which huſband was ſtill alive; and, in this caſe, a licence to marry was giving her liberty of having three huſbands at one time. The patriarch, for theſe reaſons, refuſed his authority to this manifold adultery and inceſt; nor could he, notwithſtanding the interceſſion of the whole court, ever be brought to comply. His firmneſs (however commendable) greatly increaſed the hatred to his perſon, and averſion to the church of Rome.

One day when the king was ſitting in his apartment, a monk entered the room, crying with a loud voice, "Hear "the ambaſſador of God and of the Virgin Mary!" The king, upon firſt ſight of the man, expecting ſome improper liberty might be taken, ordered his attendants to turn him out at the door, and, being removed from his preſence, to bring word what he had to ſay, which was to this effect: "It is three days ſince I roſe from the dead. One day when I was ſtanding in paradiſe, God called me, and ſent me with this meſſage to you:—O emperor! ſays God, it is now many years

that I hoped you would amend of the great ſin, the having forſaken the faith of your anceſtors. All this time the Virgin Mary was kneeling before her bleſſed Son, beſeeching him to pardon you; and, upon the whole, it was agreed, that, unleſs you repent in a fortnight's time, you ſhould be puniſhed in ſuch a manner that you will not forget it preſently."

Socinios deſired them to aſk the man, "How it was poſſible that, having ſo lately left the grave, his body ſhould have ſo little of the emaciated appearance of one long buried, and be now in ſuch good caſe, fat and fair?" To this he anſwered, "That, in paradiſe, he thanked God there was abundance of every thing; and people were very well uſed there, for he had lived upon good bread, and plenty of good wine, biſkets, and ſweetmeats." To which Socinios anſwered, "Tell him, after the pains he had taken, it would be wrong in me to keep him long from ſo good a place as this his paradiſe. Let him go and acquaint the perſon who ſent him, I ſhall live and die in the Roman Catholic faith; and, in order that he may deliver the meſſage quickly in the other world, ſpeed him inſtantly out of this, by hanging him upon the tree before the palace-gate."

The love of the wine, ſweetmeats, and other celeſtial food, ſeemed to have forſaken the ambaſſador. Upon hearing this meſſage he recanted, and was pardoned at the joint petition of thoſe of the court that were preſent, who concurred with the monk in thinking, that the meſſage of the emperor was an indecent one, and ought not to be delivered; that having been in paradiſe once, was as much as fell to the lot of any one man, and that he ſhould therefore remain upon earth,

earth. The intended cataſtrophe, then, of this ſingular ambaſſador was remitted; but the truth of his miſſion was believed by the populace, and raiſed great ſcruples in every weak mind.

THE many misfortunes that had lately befallen the troops of the king were accounted as ſo much increaſe of power to the rebel Melca Chriſtos, who, encouraged by the correſpondence he held with the chiefs of the Alexandrian religion, began now to take upon him the ſtate and office of a king. His firſt eſſay was to ſend, as governor to the province of Tigrè, a ſon of that great rebel Za Selaſſé, whoſe manifold treaſons, we have already ſeen, occaſioned the death of two kings, Za Denghel and Jacob.

ASCA GEORGIS was then governor of Tigrè for Socinios, a man of merit and valour, but poor, and though related to the king himſelf, had very few ſoldiers to be depended on, excepting his own ſervants, and two bodies of troops which the king had ſent him to maintain his authority, and to keep his province in order.

THE new governor, ſent by the rebel Melca Chriſtos, had with him a conſiderable army; and, knowing the weakneſs of Aſca Georgis, he paraded through the province in the utmoſt ſecurity.

ONE Saturday which, in defiance of the king's edict, he was to ſolemnize as a feſtival equal to Sunday, he had reſolved on a party of pleaſure in a valley, where, much at his eaſe, he was preparing an entertainment for his troops and friends, and ſuch of the province as came to offer their

obedience. Intelligence of this party came to three Shums, commanders of ſmall diſtricts, two of them ſons-in-law of the king, the third a very loyal ſubject. Theſe three ſent to Aſca Georgis, to propoſe that, at a ſtated time, they ſhould, each with his own men, fall ſeparately upon the ſon of Za Selaſſé, and interrupt his entertainment.

This was executed with great order and punctuality. In the height of the feſtival, the rebels were ſurrounded by an unexpected enemy. To think of fighting was too late, nor was there time for flight. The greateſt part of the army was cut to pieces with little reſiſtance. The new governor ſaved himſelf among the reſt by the goodneſs of his horſe, leaving Billetana Gueta, or chief maſter of the houſehold of the rebel Melca Chriſtos, dead upon the ſpot, with about 4000 of his men. Among the plunder were taken 32 kettle-drums, which alone were evidence ſufficient of the greatneſs of the ſlaughter.

Although the happy turn Socinios's affairs had taken had given him leiſure to paſs this winter at home, and in greater quiet than he had done in former ones, yet the calm which it had produced was of very ſhort duration. The people of Laſta, perceiving ſome of the prince's army buſy in deſtroying their harveſt when almoſt ripe, came down ſuddenly upon them from the mountain, and put them to flight with very great ſlaughter. The blame of this was laid upon Sela Chriſtos, who might have prevented the calamity; and this accuſation, with many others, were brought againſt him to the king by Leſana Chriſtos.

This

This man had been condemned to die for an offence, ſome time before, by Ras Sela Chriſtos; but having fled to the king, who heard his cauſe, the ſentence was reverſed. Some time after this he fell into the hands of the Ras, who put him to death upon his former ſentence, without regarding the late pardon of the king. This violent act became the foundation upon which his enemies built many accuſations, moſtly void of truth.

The king upon this took from him the government of Gojam, and gave it to a young nobleman whoſe name was Serca Chriſtos, ſuppoſed to be a friend and dependent upon the prince Facilidas. Serca Chriſtos was no ſooner arrived in his government than he reſolved to rebel, and privately ſolicited the young prince Facilidas to take up arms and make a common cauſe againſt the king his father, in favour of the Alexandrian church. At the time that the young man departed to his government, Socinios had earneſtly recommended to him, and he had moſt ſolemnly promiſed, to protect the Catholic religion in his province, and ſeemingly for this purpoſe he had taken with him a Jeſuit named Franciſco de Carvalho.

Another affair which the king particularly charged him with was, the care of a caravan which once a-year came from Narea. This, beſides many other valuable articles for the merchant, brought 1000 wakeas of gold as tribute to the king, equal to about 10,000 dollars, or crowns of our money: its whole way was through barbarous and lawleſs nations of Galla till they arrived at the Nile; then through Gafats and Gongas, immediately after having paſſed it.

Serca Christos, in his march, was come to a ſettlement of thoſe laſt-mentioned ſavages, where Gafats, Agows, and Damots, all in peace, paſtured immenſe flocks of cattle together. There are no where, I believe, in the world, cattle ſo beautiful as thoſe of the Gafats, nor in ſuch numbers. Large plains, for many days journey, are filled ſo full of theſe that they appear as one market.

Serca Christos halted here to give graſs to his horſes; and, while this was doing, it entered into his young head, that making prize of the cattle was of much greater conſequence than protecting the caravan of Narea. Aſſembling then his cavalry, he fell upon the poor Gafats and Damots, who feared no harm; and, having ſoon put them all to flight, he drove off their cattle in ſuch numbers, that, at Dancaz, it was ſaid, above 100,000 had reached that market.

The king, much ſhocked at this violent robbery, ordered Serca Chriſtos to give up the cattle, and ſurrender himſelf as priſoner. This meſſage of the king he anſwered in terms of duty and obedience; but, in the mean time, went to the prince, and propoſed to him to declare himſelf king and champion of the church of Alexandria. Facilidas received him with ſharp reproofs, and he returned home much diſcontented. However, as he had now declared himſelf, he reſolved to put the beſt face upon the matter; and, in order to make it generally believed that the prince and he underſtood each other, he ſent him publicly word, "I have done what your highneſs ordered me; come and take poſſeſſion of your kingdom." Upon which the prince ordered his meſſenger to be put in irons, and ſent to Dancaz to the king his father.

After

After this, Serca Chriſtos ordered proclamation to be made that prince Facilidas was king, at the palace of the governor of Gojam, which Sela Chriſtos had built near the convent of Collela. As one article of it was the aboliſhing the Roman faith, the fathers ran precipitately into the convent, and ſhut the doors upon themſelves, fearing they ſhould be inſulted by the army of ſchiſmatics: but a number of the Portugueſe, who lived in the neighbourhood, being brought into the church with them, and there having been loop-holes made in the walls, and abundance of fire-arms left there in depoſit by Sela Chriſtos, the rebel governor did not chooſe to attempt any thing againſt them at that time. On the contrary, he ſent them word that he was in his heart a Roman Catholic, and only, for the preſent, obliged to diſſemble; but he would protect them to the utmoſt, deſiring them to ſend him the fire-arms left there by Sela Chriſtos, which they abſolutely refuſed to do.

Serca Christos, apprehending that his army (if not acting under ſome chief of the royal family) would forſake him on the firſt appearance of the prince, had recourſe to a child of the blood-royal, then living in obſcurity among his female relations, and this infant he made king, in hopes, if he ſucceeded, to govern during his minority. There were many who expected the prince would reconcile him to the king, eſpecially as he had yet preſerved a ſhadow of reſpect for the Jeſuits, and this he imagined was one cauſe why the ſchiſmatics had not joined him in the numbers neceſſary. In order to ſhew them that he deſigned no reconciliation with the king, and to make ſuch agreement impoſſible, he adopted the ſame ſacrilegious example that had ſo ill ſucceeded with Tecla Georgis.

Za Selasse, a prieſt of Selalo, had been heard to ſay, when Serca Chriſtos was appointed to the government of Gojam, "There is an end of the Catholic faith in this province." Being now called before the governor, he was forbid to ſay maſs according to the forms of the church of Rome. This the prieſt ſubmitted to; but, being ordered to deny the two natures in Chriſt, he declared this was a point of faith which he would never give up, but always confeſs Chriſt was perfect God and perfect man. Upon this Serca Chriſtos ordered him to be ſlain; and he was accordingly thruſt through with many lances, repeating theſe words, God and man! God and man! till his laſt breath.

Serca Christos had now drawn the ſword, and thrown away the ſcabbard. Upon receiving the news, the king ordered the prince, who waited but his command, to march againſt him. The murder of Za Selaſſé had procured an acceſſion of fanatics and monks, but very few ſoldiers; ſo that as ſoon as he heard with what diligence the prince was advancing, he left his whole baggage, and fled into thoſe high and craggy mountains that form the banks of the Nile in Damot.

The prince preſſed cloſely upon him, notwithſtanding the difficulty of the ground; ſo that no ſafety remained for him but to paſs the Nile into the country of the Galla, where he thought himſelf in ſafety. In this, however, he was miſtaken. He had to do with a general of the moſt active kind, in the perſon of Facilidas, who croſſed the Nile after him, and, the third day, forced him to a battle on ſuch ground as the prince had choſen, who was likewiſe much his ſuperior in number of troops. But there was no longer

any

any remedy; Serca Chriſtos made the beſt that he could of this neceſſity, and fought with great obſtinacy, till his men being for the moſt part ſlain, he was forced, with the few that remained, to take refuge on a high hill, whence the prince obliged him to deliver himſelf up to his mercy without condition.

Facilidas immediately diſpatched news of his victory to court, and fifteen days after, he followed himſelf, bringing Serca Chriſtos, with ſix of his principal officers and counſellors, loaded with heavy chains. Being interrogated by the judges, What he had to anſwer for his treaſons? the priſoner denied that he had any occaſion to anſwer, becauſe he had already received pardon from the prince. This excuſe was not admitted, the prince having diſowned it abſolutely. Upon which he was ſentenced to death; and, though he appealed to the king, his ſentence was confirmed.

It was too late to execute the ſentence that night, but next morning the ſeven priſoners were put to death. One of the principal ſervants of Serca Chriſtos being aſked to confeſs and turn Catholic, abandoned himſelf to great rage, uttering many curſes and blaſphemies againſt the king, who, therefore, ordered him to be faſtened upon a hook of iron, where he continued his curſes till at laſt he was ſlain by lances.

Serca Christos, couſin to Socinios, was treated with more reſpect. He, with ſeeming candour, declared, that he would die a Catholic; and the king, very deſirous of this, gave orders to Diego de Mattos, a prieſt, to attend him conſtantly in priſon. After which, one night he ſent five of his con-

fidential ſervants, who killed him privately, to prevent his recantation.

Socinios had again taken Gojam from Sela Chriſtos; which laſt diſgrace ſo affected him, that he deſired to retire and live as a private man in that province.

The king, having now no other enemy, all his attention was employed in preparing for a campaign againſt Melca Chriſtos of Laſta. But, as he found his army full of diſaffection, it was propoſed to him, before he took the field, to content them ſo far as to indulge the Alexandrians in ſome rites of the old church; and a proclamation was accordingly made by the king, "That thoſe who choſe to obſerve "the Wedneſday as a faſt, inſtead of Saturday, might do it;" and ſome other ſuch indulgences as theſe were granted, which were underſtood to affect the faith.

As ſoon as this came to the ears of the patriarch, he wrote a very ſharp letter to the king, reproving him for the proclamation that he had made; adding, that it was an encroachment upon the office of the prieſthood, that he, a layman, ſhould take upon him to direct in matters merely eccleſiaſtical. He warned the king, moreover, that God would call him to the very ſtricteſt account for this preſumption, and reminded him of the words of Azarias the chief prieſt to king Uzziah, and of the puniſhment of leproſy that followed the king's encroachment on the eccleſiaſtical function; and inſiſted upon Socinios contradicting his proclamation by another.

Socinios

Socinios ſo far complied, that the alteration made by the laſt proclamation was confined to three articles. Firſt, that no liturgy, unleſs amended by the patriarch, was to be uſed in divine ſervice. Secondly, that all feaſts, excepting Eaſter and thoſe that depended upon it, ſhould be kept according to the ancient computation of time. And, thirdly, that, whoever choſe, might faſt on Wedneſday, rather than on the Saturday.

At the ſame time, the king expreſſed himſelf as greatly offended at the freedom of the application of the ſtory of Azarias and Uzziah to him. He told the patriarch plainly, that it was not by his ſermons, nor thoſe of the fathers, nor by the miracles they wrought, nor by the deſire of the people, but by his edicts alone, that the Roman religion was introduced into Ethiopia; and, therefore, that the patriarch had not the leaſt reaſon to complain of any thing being altered by the authority that firſt eſtabliſhed it. But, from this time, it plainly appears, that Socinios began to entertain ideas, at leaſt of the church diſcipline and government, very oppoſite to thoſe he had when he firſt embraced the Romiſh religion.

The king now ſet out in his campaign for Laſta with a large army, which he commanded himſelf, and under him his ſon, the prince Facilidas. Upon entering the mountain, he divided his army into three diviſions. The firſt commanded by the prince, and under him Za Mariam Adebo his maſter of the houſehold, was ordered to attack, ſcale, and lodge themſelves on the higheſt part of the mountain. The ſecond he gave to Guebra Chriſtos, governor of Begemder; and in this he placed the regiment, or body of troops, called

Inaches, veteran ſoldiers of Sela Chriſtos, and a ſmall, but brave body of troops containing the ſons of Portugueſe: Theſe he directed to occupy the valleys and low ground. In the center the king commanded in perſon.

The rebel chief and his mountaineers remained in a ſtate of ſecurity; for they neither thought to be ſo ſpeedily attacked, nor that Socinios could have raiſed ſo large an army. They abandoned, therefore, the lower ground, and all took poſts upon the heights. The prince advanced to the firſt entrance, and ordered Damo, his Billetana Gueta, to force it with four companies of good ſoldiers, who aſcended the mountain with great perſeverance; and, notwithſtanding the obſtinate defence of the rebels, made themſelves maſter of that poſt, having killed two of the braveſt officers Melca Chriſtos had, the one named Billene, the other Tecla Mariam, ſirnamed *defender of the faith*, becauſe he was the firſt that brought Galla to the aſſiſtance of Melca Chriſtos.

There were likewiſe ſlain, at the ſame time, four prieſts and five monks, after a deſperate reſiſtance; one of whom, calling the king's troops Moors, forbade them to approach for fear of defiling him, and then, with a book in his hand, threw himſelf over the rock, and was daſhed to pieces in the plain below. Here the prince met with an enemy he did not expect: The cold was ſo exceſſive, that above fifty perſons were frozen to death.

The top of the mountain, which was the ſecond entry into Laſta, was occupied by a ſtill larger body of rebels, and, therefore, neceſſary to be immediately ſtormed, elſe thoſe

below were in imminent danger of being daſhed to pieces by the large ſtones rolled down upon them. The prince divided his army into two parties, exhorting them, without loſs of time, to attack that poſt; but the rebels, ſeeing the good countenance with which they aſcended, forſook their ſtation and fled; ſo that this ſecond mountain was gained with much leſs loſs and difficulty than the firſt.

Behind this, and higher than all the reſt, appeared the third, which ſtruck the aſſailants at firſt with terror and deſpair. This was carried with ſtill leſs loſs on the part of the prince, becauſe he was aſſiſted by the Inaches and Portugueſe, who cut off the communication below, and hindered one mountain from ſuccouring the other. Here they found great ſtore of arms, offenſive and defenſive; coats of mail, mules, and kettle drums; and they penetrated to the head-quarters of Melca Chriſtos, which was a ſmall mountain, but very ſtrong in ſituation, where a Portugueſe captain ſeized the ſeat which ſerved as a throne to the rebel; and, had not they loſt time by falling to plunder, they would have taken Melca Chriſtos himſelf, who with difficulty eſcaped, accompanied by ten horſe.

To this laſt mountain Socinios repaired with the prince, and they were joined by the governors of Amhara and Tigré, who had forced their way in from the oppoſite ſide.

Hitherto all had gone well with the king; but when he had detached Guebra Chriſtos, governor of Begemder, with the Inaches and Portugueſe, who were at ſome diſtance, to deſtroy the crop, the mountaineers, again aſſembled on a high hill

hill above them, ſaw their opportunity, and fell ſuddenly upon the ſpoilers, and cut all the ſoldiers of Begemder to pieces. A conſiderable part of the Inaches fell alſo; but the reſt, joining themſelves with the Portugueſe in one body, made good their retreat to the head-quarters.

The deſtruction of the corn everywhere around them, and the impoſſibility of bringing proviſions there, as they were ſituated in the midſt of their enemies, obliged the king to think of returning before the rebels ſhould collect themſelves, and cut off his retreat. And it was with great difficulty, and ſtill greater loſs, he accompliſhed this, and retired to Dancaz, abandoning Laſta as ſoon as he had ſubdued it, but leaving Begemder almoſt a prey to the rebels whom he had conquered in Laſta.

Socinios being now determined upon another campaign againſt Laſta, and for the relief of Begemder, ordered his troops to hold themſelves in readineſs to march as ſoon as the weather ſhould permit. But an univerſal diſcontent had ſeized the whole army. They ſaw no end to this war, nor any repoſe from its victories obtained with great bloodſhed, without ſpoil, riches, or reward; no territory acquired to the king, nor nation ſubdued; but the time, when they were not actually in the field, filled up with executions and the conſtant effuſion of civil blood, that ſeemed to be more horrid than war itſelf. They, therefore, poſitively refuſed to march againſt Laſta; and the prince was deputed by them to inform the king, that they did not ſay the Roman faith was a bad one, as they did not underſtand it, nor deſire to be inſtructed; that this was an affair which entirely regarded themſelves, and no one would pretend to ſay there was any

any merit in profeſſing a religion they did not underſtand or believe: that they were ready, however, to march and lay down their lives for the king and common-weal, provided he reſtored them their ancient religion, without which they would have no concern in the quarrel, nor even wiſh to be conquerors. Whether the king was really in the ſecret or not, I ſhall not ſay; but it is expreſsly mentioned in the annals of his reign, that Socinios did promiſe by his ſon to the army, that he would reſtore the Alexandrian faith if he ſhould return victorious over Laſta; and the ſudden manner in which he executed this muſt convince every other perſon that it was ſo.

The army now marched from Dancaz, upon intelligence arriving that the rebels had left their ſtrong-holds in Laſta, and were in their way to the capital to give the king battle there. It was the 26th of July 1631 the king diſcovered, by his ſcouts, that the rebel Melca Chriſtos was at hand, having with him an army of about 25,000 men. Upon this intelligence he ordered his troops to halt, and hear maſs from Diego de Mattos; and, having choſen his ground, he halted again at mid-day, and confeſſed, according to the rite of the church of Rome, and then formed his troops in order of battle.

It was not long till the enemy came in ſight, but without ſhewing that alacrity and deſire of engaging they uſed to do when in their native mountains. The king, at the head of the cavalry, fell ſo ſuddenly and ſo violently upon them, that he broke through the van-guard commanded by Melca Chriſtos, and put them to flight before his foot could come up. The reſt of the army followed the example of the lead-

er, and the enemy were everywhere trodden down and deſtroyed by the victorious horſe, till night put an end to the purſuit.

Melca Christos, in the beginning of the engagement, ſaved himſelf by the ſwiftneſs of his horſe; but 8000 of the mountaineers were ſlain upon the ſpot, among whom was Bicané, general to Melca Chriſtos, an excellent officer both for council and the field, and ſeveral other conſiderable perſons, as well inhabitants of Laſta as others, who had taken that ſide from diſlike to the king and his meaſures.

Next morning the king went out with his ſon to ſee the field of battle, where the prince Facilidas is ſaid to have ſpoke to this effect in name of the army: "Theſe men, whom you ſee ſlaughtered on the ground, were neither Pagans nor Mahometans at whoſe death we ſhould rejoice—they were Chriſtians, lately your ſubjects and your countrymen, ſome of them your relations. This is not victory which is gained over ourſelves. In killing theſe you drive the ſword into your own entrails. How many men have you ſlaughtered? How many more have you to kill? We are become a proverb even among the Pagans and Moors for carrying on this war, and for apoſtatizing, as they ſay, from the faith of our anceſtors."—The king heard this ſpeech without reply, and returned manifeſtly diſconſolate to Dancaz; though many times before he had feaſted and triumphed for the gaining of a leſſer victory.

After his arrival at Dancaz, he had a conference with the patriarch Alphonſo Mendes, who, in a long ſpeech, upbraided him with having deſerted the Catholic faith at the time

time when the victory obtained by their prayers gave him an opportunity of eſtabliſhing it. The king anſwered, with ſeeming indifference, that he had done every thing for the Catholic faith in his power; that he had ſhed the blood of thouſands, and as much more was to be ſhed; and ſtill he was uncertain if it would produce any effect; but that he ſhould think of it, and ſend him his reſolutions to-morrow.

The next day Socinios made a declaration by Za Mariam to the patriarch, to this purport: "When we embraced the faith of Rome, we laboured for it with great diligence, but the people ſhewed no affection for it. Julius rebelled out of hatred againſt Sela Chriſtos, under pretence of being defender of the ancient faith, and was ſlain, together with many of his followers. Gabriel did the ſame. Tecla Georgis, likewiſe, made a league to die for the Alexandrian faith, which he did, and many people with him. The ſame did Serca Chriſtos the preceding year; and thoſe peaſants of Laſta fight for the ſame cauſe at this day. The faith of Rome is not a bad one; but the men of this country do not underſtand it. Let thoſe that like it remain in that faith, in the ſame way as the Portugueſe did in the time of Atzenaf Segued; let them eat and drink together, and let them marry the daughters of Abyſſinians. As for thoſe that are not inclined to the Roman faith, let them follow their ancient one as received from the church of Alexandria."

Upon this declaration, delivered by Za Mariam, the patriarch inquired if it came from the king. Being anſwered that it did; after a little pauſe, he returned this anſwer by Emanuel Almeyda, "That the patriarch underſtood that both religions ſhould be permitted in the kingdom, and that

the Alexandrians were to have every indulgence that could be wiſhed by them, without violating the purity of the Catholic faith; that, therefore, he had no difficulty of allowing the people of Laſta to live in the faith of their anceſtors without alteration, as they had never embraced any other; but as for thoſe that had ſworn to perſiſt in the Catholic faith, and had received the communion in that church, by no means, without a grievous ſin, could it be granted to them to renounce that faith in which they had deliberately ſworn to live and die."

The king, upon this anſwer, which he underſtood well, and expected, only replied, "What is to be done? I have no longer the power of government in my own kingdom;"—and immediately ordered a herald to make the following proclamation:—

"Hear us! hear us! hear us! Firſt of all we gave you the Roman Catholic faith, as thinking it a good one; but many people have died fighting againſt it, as Julius, Gabriel, Tecla Georgis, Serca Chriſtos, and, laſtly, theſe rude peaſants of Laſta. Now, therefore, we reſtore to you the faith of your anceſtors; let your own prieſts ſay their maſs in their own churches; let the people have their own altars for the ſacrament, and their own liturgy, and be happy. As for myſelf, I am now old and worn out with war and infirmities, and no longer capable of governing; I name my ſon Facilidas to reign in my place."

Thus, in one day, fell the whole fabric of the Roman Catholic faith, and hierarchy of the church of Rome, in Abyſſinia; firſt regularly eſtabliſhed, as I muſt always think, by Peter

ter Paez, in moderation, charity, perſeverance, long-ſuffering, and peace; extended and maintained afterwards by blood and violence beyond what could be expected from heathens, and thrown down by an exertion of the civil power in its own defence, againſt the encroachments of prieſthood and eccleſiaſtical tyranny, which plainly had no other view than, by annihilating the conſtitution under its native prince, to reduce Abyſſinia to a Portugueſe government, as had been the caſe with ſo many independent ſtates in India already.

This proclamation was made on the 14th of June 1632. After this Socinios took no care of public affairs. He had been for a long time afflicted with various complaints, eſpecially ſince the laſt campaign in Laſta; and affairs were now managed by prince Facilidas in his father's place, though he did not take upon him the title of King. Emana Chriſtos, brother of Sela Chriſtos, a ſteady Alexandrian, and Guebra Chriſtos, were then made governors of Laſta and Begemder; but no ſteps were taken in this interval againſt the Jeſuits.

On the 7th of September the king died, and was buried with great pomp, by his ſon Facilidas, in the church of Ganeta Jeſus, which he himſelf had built, profeſſing himſelf a Roman Catholic to the laſt. The Portugueſe hiſtorians deny both his reſignation of the crown, and his perſeverance in the Roman Catholic faith to his death, but this apparently for their own purpoſes.

He was a prince remarkable for his ſtrength of body; of great courage and elevation of mind; had early learned the

exercise of arms, patience, perseverance, and every military virtue that could be acquired; and had passed the first of his life as a private person, in the midst of hardships and dangers.

He is celebrated to this day in Abyssinia for a talent, which seems to be the gift of nature, that of choosing upon the first view the proper ground for the camp or battle, and embracing, in his own mind in a moment, all the advantages and disadvantages that could result from any particular part of it. This talent is particularly recorded in several short proverbs, or military adages, such as the following: "Blind him first, or you shall never beat him." This most material qualification seemed to have been in part transmitted to Ras Michael, the great general in my time, descended from Socinios by his mother; and, by this superiority alone over the other commanders opposed to him, he is said to have been victorious in forty-three pitched battles.

Socinios embraced the Catholic religion from conviction, and studied it with great application, as far as his narrow means of instruction would allow him; and there can be no doubt that, under the moderate conduct of Peter Paez, who converted him, he would have died a martyr for that religion; and there seems as little reason to doubt, conscientious as he was, if he had been a young man he would have quitted it for the good of his country, and from his inability to suffer the tyranny of the patriarch Alphonso Mendes, and his continual encroachment upon civil government. Being, in the last years of his life, left without one soldier to draw his sword for the Catholic cause, he kept his religion, and abandoned his crown; and having been, it should seem, for some time convinced that the government

of the church of Rome, in ſuch hands as he left it, was incompatible with monarchy, he took no pains to change Facilidas's known ſentiments, or to render him favourable to the Roman faith, or to name another of his ſons to ſucceed him whom he found to be more ſo.

The Jeſuits, conſidering only the cataſtrophe, and unmindful of the ſtrenuous efforts made to eſtabliſh their religion during his whole reign, have traduced his character as that of an apoſtate, for giving way to the univerſal demand of his people to have their ancient form of worſhip reſtored when his army had deſerted him, and he himſelf was dying of old age. But every impartial man will admit, that the ſtep he took, of abdicating his ſovereignty over a people who had abjured the religion he had introduced among them, was, in his circumſtances, the nobleſt action of his life, and juſt the reverſe of apoſtacy.

This reſignation of the crown, and his tenacious perſevering in the Catholic faith, together with the moderation of his ſon, the prince Facilidas, in appointing a regency to govern, rather than to mount the throne himſelf during his father's life, are three facts which we know to be true from the Abyſſinian annals, and which the Jeſuits have endeavoured to ſuppreſs, that they might the more eaſily blacken the character both of the father and the ſon.

They have pretended that it was the queen, and other ladies at court, who by their influence ſeduced the king from the Catholic religion. But Socinios was then paſt ſeventy, and the queen near ſixty, and he had no other wives or miſtreſſes. To judge, moreover, by his behaviour in the affair of

of Adera, ſiſter to Tecla Georgis, the voice of the women at court ſeems to have had no extraordinary weight with him. In a word, he never varied in his religion after he embraced that of Rome, but ſtedfaſtly adhered to it, when the pride and bad conduct of the Jeſuits, its profeſſors, had ſcarcely left another friend to it in the whole kingdom; and, therefore, the charge of apoſtacy is certainly an unmerited falſehood.

As it is plain the Portugueſe, from the beginning, believed their religion could only be eſtabliſhed by force, and were perſuaded ſuch means were lawful, the blame of ſo much bloodſhed for ſo many years, and the total miſcarriage of the whole ſcheme at laſt, lay at the door of their ſovereign, the king of Spain and Portugal; who, having ſucceeded to his wiſh in his conqueſt of India, ſeems not to have had the ſame anxiety the patriarch had for the converſion of Abyſſinia, nor even to have thought further of ſending a body of troops with his prieſts to the ſuccour of Socinios, whom he left to the prayers of Urban VIII. the merit of Ignatius Loyola, and the labours of his furious and fanatic diſciples.

TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

BOOK IV.

ANNALS OF ABYSSINIA,

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL.

CONTINUATION OF THE ANNALS, FROM THE DEATH OF SOCINIOS TILL MY ARRIVAL IN ABYSSINIA.

FACILIDAS, OR SULTAN SEGUED.

From 1632 to 1665.

The Patriarch and Miſſionaries are baniſhed—Seek the Protection of a Rebel—Delivered up to the King, and ſent to Maſuah—Prince Claudius rebels—Sent to Wechné—Death and Character of the King.

AS ſoon as the prince Facilidas had paid the laſt honours to his father, he ſet about compoſing thoſe diſorders which had ſo long diſtracted the kingdom by reaſon of the difference of religion. Accordingly he wrote to the patri-

arch, that, the Alexandrian faith being now reſtored, his leaving the kingdom had become indiſpenſible: that he had lately underſtood, that an Abuna, ſent for by his predeceſſor and by himſelf, was now actually on the way, and only deferred his arrival from a reſolution not to enter the kingdom till the Romiſh patriarch and his prieſts ſhould have left it; and, therefore, he commanded the patriarch and fathers, aſſembled from their ſeveral convents in Gojam and Dembea, to retire immediately to Fremona, there to wait his further pleaſure.

The patriarch endeavoured to parry this, with offering new conceſſions and indulgencies; but the king informed him that he was too late; and that he wiſhed him to be adviſed, and fly, while it was time, from greater harm that would otherwiſe fall upon him.

It was not long before the patriarch had revenge of Facilidas for this intimation of the expectation of a ſucceſſor in the perſon of the Abuna. For on that very Eaſter there did arrive one, whoſe name was Sela Chriſtos, calling himſelf Abuna, who performed all the functions of his office, dedicated churches, adminiſtered the ſacrament, and ordained prieſts. After continuing in office ſome months, he was detected by a former companion of his, and found to be a man of very bad character, from Nara, the frontier of Abyſſinia, and that by profeſſion he had been a dealer in horſes.

Facilidas then ordered his uncle, Sela Chriſtos, to be brought before him, received him kindly, and offered him again his riches and employments. That brave man, Chriſtian in every thing but in his hatred and jealouſy againſt his

his ſovereign and nephew, refuſed abſolutely to barter his faith to obtain the greateſt good, or avoid the greateſt puniſhment, it was in the power of the king to inflict. After repeated trials, all to no purpoſe, the king, overcome by the inſtigation of his enemies, baniſhed him to Anabra in Shawada, a low, unwholeſome diſtrict amidſt the mountains of Samen. But hearing that he ſtill kept correſpondence with the Jeſuits, and that their common reſolution was to ſolicit Portugueſe troops from India, and remembering his former oath, he ſent orders to his place of exile to put him to death, and he was in conſequence hanged upon a cedar-tree.

Tellez, the Portugueſe hiſtorian, in his collection of martyrs that died for the faith in Abyſſinia, has deſervedly inſerted the name of Sela Chriſtos; but profeſſes that he is ignorant of the time of his death, and under what ſpecies of torment he ſuffered. The only information that I can give is what I have juſt now written. It was in the beginning of the year 1634 he was carried to Shawada in chains, and confined upon the mountain Anabra; but no mention is made of any other hardſhip being put upon him than his being in irons, nor is more uſual in that kind of baniſhment. It was at the end of that year, however, that he was executed in the manner above mentioned, being ſuſpected of having correſponded with the patriarch and Jeſuits, and afterwards of inciting his nephew Claudius to rebel, as, it appears, he had meditated long before, and actually did very ſoon after.

The 9th of March 1633, the king ordered the patriarch to leave Dancaz, and, with the reſt of the fathers, to proceed im-

mediately to Fremona, under the conduct of four people of the first consideration, Tecla Georgis, brother of Keba Christos, Tecla Saluce, one of the principal persons in Tigré, and two Azages, men of great dignity at court. These were joined by a party of soldiers belonging to Claudius, brother of the king, supposed to have been in the conspiracy with Sela Christos his uncle, to supplant his brother Facilidas by the help of the Jesuits and Portuguese troops from India. But as soon as the patriarch had fallen into disgrace, and Sela Christos lost his life, that prince returned to the church of Alexandria, as did all the other sons of Socinios; after which, Claudius seized to his own use all the lands and effects that he found in Gojam, and was now by the king made governor of Begemder. Under this escort the patriarch and his company arrived at Fremona in the end of April 1633, after having been often robbed and ill-treated by the way, the guards that were given to defend them conniving with the banditti that came to rob them.

However strictly the fathers observed the precepts of scripture on other occasions, in this they did not follow the line of conduct prescribed by our Saviour—"And whoso-"ever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when you "depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your "feet." They were not sheep that went patiently and dumb to the slaughter; and, if their hearts, as they say, were full of love and charity to Abyssinia, it was strangely accompanied with the resolution they had taken to send Jerome Lobo, the most famous, because the most bigotted Jesuit of the whole band, first to the viceroy of India, and then to Spain, to solicit an army and fleet which were to lay all this kingdom in blood.

The

The king was perfectly adviſed of all that paſſed. As he ſaw that the patriarch endeavoured to gain time, and knew the reaſon of it; and, as the fathers among them had a conſiderable quantity of fire-arms, he ſent an officer to the patriarch at Fremona, commanding him to deliver up the whole of theſe, with gun-powder and other ammunition, and to prepare, at the ſame time, to ſet out for Maſuah. This at firſt the patriarch refuſed to do. Nor did Facilidas puniſh this diſobedience by any harſher method than convincing him mildly of the imprudence and inutility of ſuch refuſal, and the bad conſequences to themſelves. Upon which the patriarch at laſt ſurrendered the articles required to the officer ſent by the king, but he reſolved very differently as to the other injunction of carrying all his brethren to Maſuah. On the contrary, he determined by every means to ſcatter them about the kingdom of Abyſſinia, and leave them behind if he was forced to embark at Maſuah, which he, however, reſolved to avoid and reſiſt to the utmoſt of his power.

In order to do this, it was reſolved that he ſhould ſolicit the Baharnagaſh (John Akay, then in rebellion) to take them under his protection, and for that purpoſe to ſend a number of armed men, on a night appointed, to meet them near Fremona, and carry them in ſafety from any purſuit of the governor of Tigré. This project, extraordinary as it was, ſucceeded. Akay promiſed them his protection. The patriarch and prieſts, deceiving the guard the king had ſet upon them, eſcaped in the night, and joined the ſoldiers of John Akay, commanded by Tecla Emanuel, who was ready to receive them: They took refuge at Addicota, the ſoldiers of the guard, though alarmed, not daring to purſue them in the night, as

not

not knowing the number and power of their protectors, and fearing they might fall into ſome ambuſh.

It may not be amiſs here to take notice, that this John Akay was the very man with whom Tecla Georgis had aſſociated for the murder of Abba Jacob. He was a ſhrewd man, and had great power by living in the neighbourhood of Sennaar, to which country he could retreat when occaſion required. He received the patriarch with great kindneſs.

Addicota is an inacceſſible rock, perpendicular on all ſides, excepting where there is a narrow path by which was the entrance. Here the patriarch thought he could continue in Abyſſinia, in defiance of Facilidas, till he ſhould procure ſuccours from India.

It was not, however, long before he found how little dependence there was upon this new protector; for, in the midſt of all his ſchemes, he received orders to remove from Addicota, under pretence that they were not there enough in ſafety; and Akay transferred them vexatiouſly from place to place, into hot and unwholeſome ſituations, always under the ſame pretence, till he had deſtroyed their healths, and exhauſted their ſtrength and patience.

There is but one way of diſpoſing ſuch people to grant a favour, and it was ſurpriſing the patriarch did not find this out ſooner. Jerome Lobo was ſent with a ſmall preſent in gold, deſiring they might have leave to continue in their old habitation, Addicota. Lobo found John Akay very much taken up in a purſuit that ſome ignorant monks had put

into his head. They had made him believe that there was a treaſure hid under a certain mountain which they had ſhewn him, but that the devil who guarded it had conſtantly hindered his predeceſſors from acquiring it. At preſent they had found out, that this devil had gone a journey far off, was become blind and lame, and was, beſides, in very great affliction for the death of a ſon, the only hopes of his devilſhip's family, having now only a daughter remaining, very ugly, lame, ſquinting, and ſickly, and that all theſe reaſons would hinder him from being very anxious about his treaſure. But, even ſuppoſing he did come, they had an old monk that would exorciſe him, a man as eminent for wiſdom as for ſanctity.

In ſhort, they produced a monk, one of their brethren, above a hundred years old, whom they mounted upon a horſe, then tied him to the animal, wrapping him round with black wool, which, it ſeems, was the conjuring habit. He was followed by a black cow and ſome monks, who carried beer, hydromel, and roaſted wheat, which was neceſſary, it ſeemed, to refreſh the devil after his long journey and great affliction, and put him in good humour, if he ſhould appear.

The old monk ſung without ceaſing, the workmen wrought vigorouſly, and much earth and ſtones were removed; at laſt they diſcovered ſome rat, mice, or mole-holes, at the ſight of which a cry of joy was heard from all the parties preſent.

The old monk ſings again; the cow is brought in great hurry, and ſacrificed, and pieces of it thrown to the rats and mice;

mice: again they fall to work with double keenneſs, the mole-holes vaniſh, and a hard rock appears. This being the laſt obſtacle, they fall keenly upon the rock, and the old monk chants till he is hoarſe with ſinging; the heat of the ſun is exceſſive; no gold appears; John Akay loſes his patience, and aſks when it may be ſeen? The monks lay the whole blame upon him, becauſe, they ſay, he had not enough of faith. They give over work; with one conſent fall to eating the cow, and then diſperſe.

Father Jerome, takes the opportunity of this diſappointment to abuſe the monks. He preſents the Baharnagaſh with two ounces of gold, and ſome other trifles, inſtead of the treaſure which he was to get in the mountain: he obtains the requeſt he came to ſolicit, and the patriarch and fathers return to Addicota.

Facilidas, informed of the aſylum afforded to the Jeſuits who had fled from Fremona, applied to John Akay, promiſing him forgivenneſs of what was paſt if he would deliver the prieſts under his protection. This John Akay declined to do from motives of delicacy. It was breaking his word to deliver his gueſts into the hands of the king; but, by a very ſtrange refinement, he agreed to ſell them to the Turks. Accordingly they were delivered for a ſum to the baſha of Maſuah, who received them with much greater kindneſs than they had experienced in the Chriſtian country from which they fled.

Two Jeſuits were purpoſely left behind, with the conſent of John Akay, unknown to Facilidas, in fervent hopes that ſome occaſion would ſoon offer of ſuffering martyrdom for

the true faith; and in this expectation they were not long diſappointed, all thoſe who were left in Abyſſinia having loſt their lives by violent deaths, moſt of them on a gibbet, by order of Facilidas, the laſt of whom was Bernard Nogeyra.

Facilidas, weary of the obſtinacy of theſe miſſionaries, uneaſy alſo at the ſuſpicions they created, that a number of Portugueſe troops would be poured in upon his country by the viceroy of India, concluded a treaty with the baſhas of Maſuah and Suakem, for preventing any Portugueſe paſſing into Abyſſinia, by ſhutting theſe ports againſt them. Not above eight years before, that is, in the year 1624, Socinios had ſent a zebra, and ſeveral other curious articles, as preſents to the baſha of Suakem, with a requeſt to him not to obſtruct, as the Turks had uſed to do, the entrance of any Portugueſe into his dominions. But thoſe times were now ſo changed, that both nations, Turks and Abyſſinians, had reſolved, with one conſent, to exclude them all, for their mutual ſafety, peace, and advantage.

This treaty with the Turks, made by Facilidas, probably gave riſe to that calumny of the Jeſuits, that, for fear of a return of the Portugueſe, that prince had embraced the Mahometan religion, and ſent for preceptors from Mocha to inſtruct him in their tenets. This, I ſay, if not founded upon the treaty I mention, was deſtitute of the leaſt ſhadow of truth; but, like other calumnies then propagated in great number, aroſe ſolely from the rage, malice, and heated imaginations of deſperate fanatics.

Amidst the general regret this revolution in the church of Ethiopia occaſioned at Rome, there were ſome who thought the pride, obſtinacy, and violence of the Jeſuits, the hardneſs and cruelty of their hearts in inſtigating Socinios to that perpetual effuſion of blood, and their independence, their encroachments upon, and reſiſtance of the civil power, were faults reſulting from the inſtitutions of that particular ſociety, and that theſe occaſioned the miſcarriage; that a well-grounded averſion to the teachers had created a repugnance to the doctrines preached, and was the reaſon of the expulſion of the fathers, and the relapſe of Abyſſinia to the Alexandrian faith. From this perſuaſion, ſix capuchins, all of them Frenchmen of the reformed Order of St Francis, were ſent from Rome after the death of Nogeyra, by the congregation *De Propagandâ Fide*, and theſe had protections from the grand ſignior.

Two attempted the entering Abyſſinia by way of the Indian Ocean, that is, from Magadoxa, and were ſlain by the Galla, after advancing a very ſhort way into the country. Two of them penetrated into Abyſſinia, and were ſtoned to death. The remaining two, hearing the fate of their companions at Maſuah, and not being ſo violently bent upon a crown of martyrdom as were the Portugueſe miſſionaries, prudently returned home, carrying with them the account of this bad ſucceſs.

Three other capuchins were ſent after this. It is impoſſible to judge from their conduct what idea they had formed; for they themſelves gave the firſt information of their intended coming to Facilidas, who thereupon recommended it to the baſha to receive them according to their merits; and

and thereupon, on their arrival at Suakem, their heads were cut off by his order; the ſkins of their heads and faces ſtripped off and ſent to the king of Abyſſinia, that, by their colour, he might know them to be franks, and by their tonſure to be prieſts. Nor was it poſſible afterwards to introduce any Catholic miſſionaries, either during this or the following reign.

Facilidas having thus provided againſt being further diſturbed by miſſionaries, and having reduced all his ſubjects to the obedience of the Alexandrian church, ſent again meſſengers to bring an Abuna from Cairo, while he took the field againſt Melca Chriſtos his rival, who continued in arms at the head of the peaſants of Laſta, though there was now no longer any pretence that the Alexandrian faith was in danger. Both armies met in Libo, a country of the Galla, where a panic ſeized the king's troops, his horſe flying at the firſt onſet. The royal army being entirely diſperſed, Melca Chriſtos purſued his good fortune, and entered the king's palace, took poſſeſſion of the throne, and was crowned; he appointed to all the great places in government, and diſtributed a largeſs, or bounty, to his ſoldiers.

The Portugueſe hiſtorians ſay, that this happened at Dancaz, not at Libo. But they ſhould have remembered what they before have ſaid, that an epidemic fever raged in all Dembea, ſo that the king was not at Dancaz that year. He paſſed the winter of the preceding one at Dobit, near Begemder.

The memoirs of theſe miſſionaries, even when they were in the country, are to be read with great caution, being

full of misrepresentations of the manners and characters of men, magnifying some actions, slighting others, and attributing to their favourites services that were really performed by their adversaries; and, from the coming of Alphonso Mendes, till they were banished to Masuah, great part of their account is untrue, and the rest very suspicious. After their retiring to India, which is the time we are now speaking of, the whole that they have published is one continued tissue of falsehood and calumny, either hear-say stories communicated to them, as they say, by the remnants of zealots still alive in Abyssinia, or fabrications of their own, invented for particular purposes. In continuing this history, I shall take notice of some of these, though for facts I rely entirely upon the annals of the country, treating, however, the Abyssinian account of the Jesuits doctrines and behaviour with the same degree of caution.

This forwardness of his rival Melca Christos did not discourage Facilidas. Without losing a moment, he sent expresses to Kasmati Dimmo, governor of Samen, to Ras Sela Christos, of Damot, and to his brother Claudius, governor of Begemder, ordering them to march and attack Melca Christos, then acting as sovereign in the king's palace at Libo.

These three generals were not slack in obeying the commands of Facilidas. They surrounded Melca Christos before he expected them, and forced him to a battle, in which he was defeated and lost his whole army. He himself, fighting manfully at the head of his troops, was slain hand to hand by Cosmas, a soldier of Kasmati Claudius, the king's brother.

JEROME LOBO mentions Facilidas's bad ſucceſs againſt the Gallas and Agows as an inſtance of divine vengeance which purſued him. But if the approbation or diſapprobation of heaven is to be appealed to in this reign as a proof of the juſtneſs of the meaſures taken, we muſt be obliged to ſay the cauſe of the Jeſuits was not the cauſe of heaven. If we except the temporary advantage gained over Facilidas, and the accident that happened to his army at Laſta, perpetual victory had attended the wars in which this prince was engaged; for ſo far was he from being unfortunate this campaign againſt the Agows, that, on the 9th of February 1636, he marched from Libo into Gojam, and totally defeated the two great tribes Azena and Zeegam. After which he ſent his army with Kaſmati Melca Bahar, who coming up with the Galla, a great body of whom had made an incurſion into Gojam, he totally overthrew them, and paſſing the Nile into their country, laid it waſte, and returned with a great number of cattle, and multitudes of women and children to be ſold as ſlaves.

THE king then returned to Begemder, and took up his head-quarters at Gonſala; but, ſoon hearing that the Abuna Marcus was arrived, he quitted that place, and came to meet him in Gondar.

THE next year, which was the fifth of his reign, and the firſt of the coming of Abuna Marcus, he again fought with the Agows, and beat the Denguis, Hancaſha, and the Zeegam, and paſſed that winter in Gafat; nor was he ever unfortunate with the Agows or Galla. But a misfortune happened this year (the 6th of his reign) which very much affected the whole kingdom. The people of Laſta ſeemed to grow

grow more inveterate after the defeat they had received under Melca Chriſtos. In the ſtead of that prince ſlain in battle, they appointed his ſon, a young man of good hopes.

Facilidas, truſting to his former reputation acquired in theſe mountains in his father's time, on the 3d of March 1638 advanced with a large army into Laſta, with a deſign to bring theſe peaſants to a battle. But the rebels, growing wiſe by their loſſes, no longer choſe to truſt themſelves on the plain, but, retiring to the ſtrongeſt poſts, fortified them ſo judiciouſly, that, without riſking any loſs themſelves, they cut off all ſupplies or proviſions coming to the king's army.

It happened at that time the cold was ſo exceſſive that almoſt the whole army periſhed amidſt the mountains; great part from famine, but a greater ſtill from cold, a very remarkable circumſtance in theſe latitudes. Laſta is barely 12° from the Line, and it was now the equinox in March, ſo that the ſun was but 12° from being in the zenith of Laſta, and there was in the day twelve hours of ſun. Yet here is an example of an army, not of foreigners, but natives, periſhing with cold in their own country, when the ſun is no farther than 12° from being vertical, or from being directly over their heads; a ſtrong proof this, as I have often remarked, that there is no way of judging by the degrees of heat in the thermometer, what effect that degree of heat or cold is to have upon the human body.

The eighth year of the reign of Facilidas, Claudius, governor of Begemder, his brother, revolted and joined the re-

bels

bels of Laſta. It ſeems, that this prince had been long encouraged by the Jeſuits, and his uncle Sela Chriſtos, in expectation of ſucceeding his father Socinios, and ſupplanting Facilidas, his brother, in the kingdom. But, after the baniſhment of the Jeſuits, and the death of Sela Chriſtos, Facilidas thinking, theſe bad counſellors being removed, he would continue firm in his duty, and willing to diſbelieve the whole that had been reported of his deſigns, made him governor of Begemder.

It happened, however, that this very year two Abunas arrived from Egypt, one by way of Sennaar, the other by Dancali. Upon inquiry it was found, that Abba Michael, the latter of theſe Abunas, had been ſent for by Kaſmati Claudius, in expectation that he was to be on the throne by the time of his Abuna's arrival. This implied clearly that the king's death was agreed on. Claudius, without attempting a vindication, or awaiting the diſcuſſion of this ſtep, fled to Laſta, and joined Laeca, ſon of Melca Chriſtos, a youth then at the head of the rebels.

Facilidas baniſhed Abba Michael to Serké, a Mahometan town in the way to Sennaar, and admitted Abba Johannes, whom he himſelf had ſent for from Cairo, into the office of Abuna.

Soon after this, Claudius was ſurpriſed and taken priſoner, and brought to the king, and, though ſtained in a high degree with ingratitude, treaſon, and intended fratricide, he could not be brought to order his execution, but, like a wiſe and merciful prince, reflecting on the ancient uſages of the empire, and how much royal blood might be daily

ſaved

ſaved by ſequeſtering the deſcendents of the imperial family upon the mountain, he choſe that of Wechné in Beleſſen, which ſerved ever after for this purpoſe.

THIS is the third mountain within the reach of written hiſtory, firſt choſen, and then reprobated, as a ſtate-priſon for all the males of the royal family, excepting the one ſeated upon the throne.

THIS interruption of the impriſonment of the princes for a time, and the reſuming it again for another period, have led the Portugueſe writers, very little acquainted with the hiſtory or conſtitution of this country, into various diſputes and difficulties, which I ſhall fully explain and reconcile in their proper place. It is ſufficient for the preſent to obſerve, that Claudius was ſent into exile to the mountain of Wechnè, and that he was the firſt prince baniſhed thither, where he lived for many years.

THE king, finding that nothing material preſſed at home, marched into Gojam to Enzagedem, whence he ſent Ras Bela Chriſtos againſt the Shangalla, N. W. of the country of the Agows. Theſe people being put upon their guard by their neighbours, all diſaffected to the king, contrived to place themſelves in ambuſh ſo judiciouſly, that Bela Chriſtos, marching in ſecurity into their country, was ſurrounded by the Shangalla, whom he thought yet at a diſtance. Great part of his troops was ſlain by the arrows of the enemy, who, from their caves and holes in the mountain, poured their miſſile weapons, ſtones, and arrows on the troops, at ſo ſmall a diſtance that every one took place, though above the reach of ſwords, and lances, or ſuch common wea-

pons; others were overpowered by large bodies of men ſallying from the thickets, and fighting them firmly foot to foot. Many officers were that day ſlain, among the reſt Alzaguè and Petros, two perſons of great diſtinction in the palace. But the king, however afflicted for the loſs of his men, well knew that this defeat would have no other conſequences; ſo returned to his capital, with reſolution to make another vigorous effort againſt Laſta.

The manner in which this expedition was prevented cannot but give us a high idea of Facilidas: Laeca, at the head of an army of veteran troops, whoſe affection he never had occaſion to doubt, thought it ſafer to truſt to the generoſity of a king, who had ſlain his father in battle, than to the acquiring a crown that was not his, by perſevering any longer in rebellion. Accordingly he ſurrendered himſelf, without condition, to Facilidas, who immediately committed him to priſon, which ſeeming ſeverity, however, meant nothing further, than to ſhew him the lenity which followed was entirely his own, and not ſuggeſted to him by the officiouſneſs of courtiers; for no ſooner was he arrived at Gondar, than he ſent for Laeca from priſon, received him not only kindly, but with great marks of diſtinction; and, inſtead of baniſhing him to Wechné, as he did his own brother Claudius, and which, as being of the blood-royal, ſhould have been his deſtination likewiſe, the king entered into a kind of treaty with Laeca, by which he gave him large poſſeſſions in Begemder near Laſta, and married him to his daughter Theoclea, by whom, however, he had no children, but lived long in conſtant friendſhip and confidence with Facilidas.

Except the events which I have already recorded, there is nothing farther in this long reign worthy of being inſiſted upon; the early inroads of the Galla, in plundering parties, and the ſeditions and revolts of the Agows from the oppreſſion and extortion of their governors, were ſuch as we find in every reign; and in all theſe Facilidas was victorious, whilſt the Hancaſha and Zeegam were greatly weakened in theſe campaigns.

Facilidas was taken ill at Gondar, in the end of October, of a diſeaſe which, from its firſt appearance, he thought would prove mortal. He, therefore, ſent to his eldeſt ſon Hannes, whom he had conſtantly kept with him, and who was now of age to govern, and recommended to him his kingdom, and the perſevering in the ancient religion. He died the 30th of September 1665, in great peace and compoſure of mind, and they buried him at Azazo.

If we are obliged to give his father the preference, from the greater variety of trials which he underwent, we muſt in juſtice allow, that, after his father, Facilidas was the greateſt king that ever ſat upon the Abyſſinian throne. He had every good quality neceſſary to conſtitute a great prince, without any alloy or mixture, that, upon ſo much provocation as he had, might have miſled him to be a bad one. He was calm, diſpaſſionate, and courteous in his behaviour. In the very difficult part he had to act between his father and the nation, the neceſſities of the times had taught him a degree of reſerve, which, if it was not natural, was not therefore the leſs uſeful to him. He was in his own perſon the braveſt ſoldier of his time, and always expoſed himſelf in proportion as the occaſion was important.

To

To this were added all the qualities of a good general, in which character he ſeems to have equalled his father Socinios, who elſe was univerſally allowed to be the firſt of his time. Fierce and violent in battle, he was backward in ſhedding blood after it. Though an enemy to the Catholic religion, yet, from duty to his father, he lived with the patriarch and Jeſuits upon ſo familiar a footing, that they confeſs themſelves it was not from any part of his behaviour to them they ever could judge him an enemy. He was moſt remarkable for an implicit ſubmiſſion to his father's commands; and, upon this principle, fought in favour of the Catholic religion againſt his own friends and perſuaſion, becauſe ſuch were the orders of his ſovereign. He was of a very mild and pleaſant temper, as appeared by his behaviour to Melca Chriſtos, to his brother Claudius, to his uncle Sela Chriſtos, and to the patriarch and Jeſuits.

It is true, that, of theſe laſt, Sela Chriſtos, and many of the Jeſuits, were put to death in his reign; but this was not till they had experienced repeated acts of mercy and forgiveneſs; ſtill, perſiſting in conſtant rebellion againſt government, they were juſtly cut off as traitors and rebels by the civil power, in the very act of their conſpiracy againſt the life of the king and conſtitution of the country.

There is publiſhed by Tellez a letter of Alphonſo Mendes, written, as is falſely ſaid, from Maſuah, where it is dated, but truly from Goa. If, as the patriarch pretends, he wrote it from Maſuah, it is another proof of this prince's clemency, that he ever ſuffered the author of ſuch an indecent libel to return to India in peace. It is well known, that, on the firſt requiſition of Facilidas, the Turks would

have delivered the patriarch into his hands; and, every one that reads it muſt allow, ſuch language from a low-born prieſt to a king, deſerved every exemplary puniſhment offended royalty could inflict: It would not have been mild, had ſuch liberty been taken by a ſtranger in his native country, Portugal.

The patriarch accuſes Facilidas with the crime committed by Abſalom, which is, I ſuppoſe, debauching his father's wives and concubines. But, unluckily for the truth of this ſtory, we have the Jeſuit's own teſtimony, that Socinios had put away his wives and concubines before he embraced the Catholic religion, ſo at his father's death this was impoſſible, unleſs he could commit inceſt with his own mother, who was at that time a woman near ſixty. But we ſhall ſuppoſe that they exiſted, were never married, and, at the time of their being put away, they were 18 years of age at an average. The king put them away in the year 1621; and, therefore, in the year 1634, they would be 30 years of age; and any body that has ſeen the effects that number of years has upon Abyſſinian beauty, muſt confeſs they could be no great temptation to a prince.

The next calumny mentioned in this libel is, the murder of his brother Claudius, nay, of all his brothers. Now we have ſeen, in the hiſtory of his reign, that Claudius had fairly forfeited his life by a meditated fratricide, and by an overt act of rebellion in which he was taken priſoner. Yet ſo mild and placable was Facilidas, that he refuſed to put him to death, but ſent him priſoner to the mountain of Wechnè, and mercifully revived the ancient uſage of baniſhing the princes of the blood-royal to the mountain, inſtead of executing them,

them, which had been the practice to his time, and had occaſioned the death of above ſixty of theſe unfortunate princes within the laſt hundred years.

To mount Wechné he alſo ſent his own ſon David, and with him all his brothers; and, ſo far from being murdered, we ſhall find them moſtly alive attending an extraordinary feſtival made for their ſakes by Facilidas's grandſon; an accident ſo rare, that it ſeems Providence had permitted it in favour and vindication of truth and innocence, and to ſtamp the lie upon the patriarch's ſcandalous aſperſions.

The third falſehood is, that Facilidas turned Mahometan, and got doctors from Mocha to inſtruct him in the Koran. We have already ſeen what gave riſe to this, if it indeed had any foundation at all; but it is a well-known fact, that, though he governed the church, during a whole reign, mildly and judiciouſly, without any mark of bigotry, never were two princes better affected to the Alexandrian church than Facilidas and his ſon; and never were two that had better reaſon, having both ſeen the diſorders that other religions had occaſioned.

We ſee throughout all this piece of the patriarchs, a ſelf-ſufficient mind, gratifying itſelf by diſgorging its paſſion and malice. If Alphonſo Mendes had no regard, as it ſeems indeed he had not; if he had no reverence to higher powers, ſuch as ſcripture had taught him to have; if he was too enlightened, or too infatuated, to take our Saviour's precepts for his rule, and, ſhaking the duſt of Abyſſinia from his feet, remit them to a Judge who will, at his own time, ſeparate good from evil, ſtill he ſhould have had, at leaſt, a brotherly

love

love and charity for thoſe unfortunate people who were to fall into Facilidas's hands; and we cannot reaſonably ſuppoſe but that the conſtant butcheries committed by the Turks afterwards upon the Catholic prieſts, wild enough to enter at Maſuah and Suakem, were the fruits of the calumnious, intemperate libel of the patriarch.

After the death of the laſt miſſionary, Bernard Nogeyra, no intelligence arrived of what was doing in Abyſſinia, excepting from the Dutch ſettlements of Batavia, where Abyſſinian factors, or merchants, had arrived; and where the induſtrious Mr Ludolf, very much engaged in the hiſtory of this country, and who ſpared no pains, maintained a correſpondence, and thence he was informed that Facilidas had died after a long and proſperous reign, and had left his kingdom in peace to his ſon.

This intelligence alarmed the zeal of two great champions of the Jeſuits; the one M. le Grande, late ſecretary to the French embaſſy to Portugal; and the other M. Piques, a member of the Sorbonne, a very confuſed, dull diſputant upon the difference of religion.

These two worthies, without any proof or intelligence but their own warm and weak imaginations, fell violently upon poor Ludolf, accuſing him of falſehood, partiality, and prevarication; and, right or wrong, they would have Facilidas plunged up to the neck in troubles, wading through labyrinths of misfortunes, conſpiracies, and defeats, certainly dead, or about to die ſome terrible death by the vengeance of heaven; and this ridiculous report is unjuſtly ſpread abroad by all the zealots of thoſe times. *Fata obſtant;*—truth

will out. The annals of the country, written without a regard to either party, ſtate, that, in the long reign of Facilidas, notwithſtanding the calamitous ſtate in which his father left him the empire, very few misfortunes only are reported to have happened either to himſelf or lieutenants.

HANNES I. OR ŒLAFE SEGUED.

From 1665 to 1680.

Bigotry of the King—Diſguſts his Son Yaſous, who flies from Gondar.

IF this prince ſucceeded to his kingdom in peace, he had the addreſs ſtill to keep it ſo. He was not in his nature averſe to war, though, beſides two feeble attempts he made upon Laſta, and one againſt the Shangalla, all without material conſequences, no military expedition was undertaken in his time; and no rebellion or competitor (ſo frequent in other reigns) at all diſturbed his.

HANNES ſeems to have had the ſeeds of bigotry in his temper; from the beginning of his reign he commanded the

the Mahometans to eat no other fleſh but what had been killed by Chriſtians; and gathered together the Catholic books, which the Jeſuits had tranſlated into the Ethiopic language, and burned them in a heap. Much of his attention was given to church matters, and, in regulating theſe, he ſeems to have employed moſt of his time. He depoſed the Abuna Chriſtadulus, appointed by his father, and in his place put the Abuna Sanuda.

This laſt meaſure ſeems to have diſpleaſed his eldeſt ſon Yaſous, who fled from the palace one night, and paſſed the Nile; and, though he was followed by Kaſmati Aſerata Chriſtos, he was not overtaken, but ſtaid ſome time in his ſiſter's houſe, and then returned to Gondar at the requeſt of his father.

A convocation of the clergy, the ſecond in this reign, was now held, and great heats and diviſions followed among two orders of monks, thoſe of Euſtathius and thoſe of Debra Libanos. The king ſeems to have aſſiſted at all theſe debates, and to have contented himſelf with holding the balance in his hands without declaring for either party. But theſe altercations and diſputes could not ſatisfy the active ſpirit of the prince his ſon, who again fled from his father and from Gondar, but was overtaken at the river Baſhilo, and brought back to the palace, where he found his father ill.

Hannes died the 19th of July, and was buried at Tedda, after having reigned 15 years. He ſeems, from the ſcanty memorials of his long reign, to have been a weak prince;

but, perhaps, if the circumſtances of the times were fully known, he may have been a wiſe one.

YASOUS I.

From 1680 to 1704.

Brilliant Expedition of the King to Wechnè—Various Campaigns againſt the Agows and Galla—Comet appears—Expedition againſt Zeegam and the Eaſtern Shangalla—Poncet's Journey—Murat's Embaſſy—Du Roule's Embaſſy—Du Roule aſſaſſinated at Sennaar—The King is aſſaſſinated.

YASOUS ſucceeded his father Hannes with the approbation of the whole kingdom. He had, as we have ſeen, twice in Hannes's life-time abſconded from the palace; and this was interpreted as implying an impatience to reign. But I rather think the cauſe was a difference of manners, his father being extremely bigotted, ſordid, and covetous; for he never, in thoſe elopements, pretended to make a party contrary to his father's intereſt, nor ſhewed the leaſt inclination to give either the army or the people a favourable impreſſion of himſelf, to the diſadvantage of the king. There was, beſides, a difference in religious principles. Yaſous had a great predilection for the monks of Debra Libanos,

banos, or the high church; while Hannes, his father, had done every thing in his power to inſtil into his ſon a prepoſſeſſion in favour of thoſe of Abba Euſtathius.

To theſe opinions, therefore, ſo widely different, as well in religion as the things of the world, I attribute the young prince's diſinclination to live with his father. This ſeems confirmed by the firſt ſtep he took upon his mounting the throne, which was to make an alteration in the church government from what his father had left it at his death.

It was on the 7th of July 1680 he was proclaimed king; the next day he depoſed the Acab Saat Conſtantius, and gave his place to Aſera Chriſtos. He then called a council of the clergy on the 27th of September, when he depoſed Itchegué Tzaga Chriſtos, and in his room named Cyriacus.

It was now the time that, according to cuſtom, he was to make his profeſſion in regard to the difference I have formerly mentioned that ſubſiſted between the two parties about the incarnation of Chriſt. But this he refuſed to do in the preſent ſtate of the church, as there was then no certain Abuna in Abyſſinia. For Hannes, before he died, had written to the patriarch of Alexandria to depoſe both Abuna Chriſtodulus and Marcus, who, in caſe of death, was to have ſucceeded him, and this under pretence that he had varied in his faith between the two contending parties.

HANNES, therefore, desired the patriarch to appoint Abuna Sanuda, a man known to be devoted to the monks of St Eustathius and their tenets; whereas the other two priests were supposed to be inclined to the monks of Debra Libanos. Yasous told his clergy that he would not suffer Sanuda to be elected; and the assembly, with little opposition, conformed to the sentiments of the king, who sent immediately thereupon to Cairo, demanding peremptorily that Marcus might be appointed Abuna, and declaring his resolution to admit no other. He then ordered the church of Tecla Haimanout to be consecrated with great solemnity; he repaired and adorned it with much magnificence, and endowed it with lands, which increased its revenue very considerably.

THESE two circumstances (especially the last) shewed distinctly to the whole kingdom his affection for the high church, as explicitly as any proclamation could have done. And in this he continued steady during his whole life, notwithstanding the many provocations he met with from that restless body of men.

HAVING thus settled the affairs of the church, he proceeded to those of the state, and appointed Anastasius (then governor of Amhara) to be Ras, or lieutenant-general, in his whole kingdom, allowing him also to keep his province of Amhara. In this he shewed a wisdom and penetration that gained him the good opinion of every one; for Anastasius was a man advanced in years, of great capacity and experience, and of a most unblemished character among his neighbours, who, in all their own affairs, had recourse to, and were determined by, his counsels.

The king then took a journey of a very extraordinary nature, and ſuch as Abyſſinia had never before ſeen. Attended only by his nobility, of whom a great number had flocked to him, he ſat down at the foot of the mountain of Wechné, and ordered all the princes of the royal family who were baniſhed, and confined there, to be brought to him.

During the laſt reign, the mountain of Wechné, and thoſe forlorn princes that lived upon it, had been, as it were, totally forgotten. Hannes having ſons of an age fit to govern, and his eldeſt ſon Yaſous living below with his father, no room ſeemed to remain for attempting a revolution, by the young candidates eſcaping from the mountain. This oblivion to which they were conſigned, melancholy as it was, proved the beſt ſtate theſe unhappy priſoners could have wiſhed; for to be much known for either good or bad qualities, did always at ſome period become fatal to the individuals. Puniſhment always followed inquiries after a particular prince; and all meſſages, queſtions, or viſits, at the inſtance of the king, were conſtantly forerunners of the loſs of life, or amputation of limbs, to theſe unhappy exiles. To be forgotten, then, was to be ſafe; but this ſafety carried very heavy diſtreſs along with it. Their revenues were embezzled by their officers or keepers, and ill paid by the king; and the ſordid temper of Hannes had often reduced them all to the danger of periſhing with hunger and cold.

Yasous, as he was well acquainted with all theſe circumſtances, ſo he was, in his nature and diſpoſition, as perfectly willing to repair the injuries that were paſt, and prevent the

the like in future. Nothing tended ſo much to conciliate the minds of the people to their ſovereign as this behaviour of Yaſous.

In the midſt of his relations there now appeared (as riſen from the dead) Claudius, ſon of Socinios, the firſt exile who was ſent to the mountain of Wechnè by his brother Facilidas, grandfather of Yaſous. This was the prince who, as we have already ſtated, was fixed upon by the Jeſuits to ſucceed his father, and govern that country when converted to the Romiſh religion by their intrigues, and conquered by the arms of the Portugueſe: This was the prince who, to make their enemies appear more odious, theſe Jeſuits have aſſerted was ſlain by his brother Facilidas, one inſtance by which we may judge of the juſtice of the other charges laid againſt that humane, wiſe, and virtuous prince, whoſe only crime was an inviolable attachment to the religion and conſtitution of his country, and the juſt abhorrence he moſt reaſonably had, as an independent prince, to ſubmit the prerogatives of his crown, and the rights of his people to the blind controul of a foreign prelate.

There came from the mountain alſo the ſons of Facilidas, with their families; and likewiſe his own brothers, Ayto Theophilus, and Ayto Claudius, ſons of his father Hatzè Hannes. The ſight of ſo many noble relations, ſome advanced in years, ſome in the flower of their youth, and ſome yet children; all, however, in tatters, and almoſt naked, made ſuch an impreſſion on the young king that he burſt into tears. Nor was his behaviour to the reſpective degrees of them leſs proper or engaging. To the old he paid that reverence and reſpect due to parents; to thoſe about his

own age, a kind and liberal familiarity; while he beſtowed upon the young ones careſſes and commendations, ſweetened with the hopes that they might ſee better times.

His firſt care was to provide them all plentifully with apparel and every neceſſary. His brothers he dreſſed like himſelf, and his uncles ſtill more richly. He then divided a large ſum of money among them all.

In the month of December, which is the pleaſanteſt ſeaſon of the whole year, the ſun being moderately hot, the ſky conſtantly clear and without a cloud, all the court was encamped under the mountain, and the inferior ſort ſtrewed along the graſs. All were treated at the expence of the king, paſſing the day and night in continual feſtivals. It is but right, ſaid the king, that I ſhould pay for a pleaſure ſo great that none of my predeceſſors ever dared to taſte it; and of all that noble aſſembly none ſeemed to enjoy it more ſincerely than the king. All pardons ſolicited for criminals at this time were granted. In this manner having ſpent a whole month, before his departure the king called for the deftar, (*i. e.* the treaſury book) in which the account of the ſum allowed for the maintenance of theſe priſoners is ſtated; and having inquired ſtrictly into the expenditure, and cancelled all grants that had been made of any part of that ſum to others, and provided in future for the full, as well as yearly payment of it, he, for his laſt act, gave to the governor of the mountain a large acceſſion of territory, to make him ample amends for the loſs of the dues he was underſtood to be intitled to from that revenue. After this, he embraced them all, aſſuring them of his conſtant protection; and, mounting his horſe, he took the keeper

er along with him, leaving all the royal family at their liberty at the foot of the mountain.

This laſt mark of confidence, more than all the reſt, touched the minds of that noble troop, who hurried every man with his utmoſt ſpeed to reſtore themſelves voluntarily to their melancholy priſon, imputing every moment of delay as a ſtep towards treaſon and ingratitude to their munificent, compaſſionate, and magnanimous benefactor. All their way was moiſtened with tears flowing from ſenſible and thankful hearts; and all the mountain reſounded with prayers for the long life and proſperity of the king, and that the crown might never leave the lineal deſcendents of his family. It was very remarkable, that, during this long reign, though he was conſtantly involved in war, no competitor from the mountain ever appeared in breach of thoſe vows they had ſo voluntarily undertaken.

There was another great advantage the king reaped by this generous conduct. All the moſt powerful and conſiderable people in the kingdom had an opportunity, at one view, to ſee each individual of the royal family that was capable of wearing the crown, and all with one voice agreed, upon the compariſon made, that, if they had been then aſſembled to elect a king, the choice would not have fallen upon any but the preſent.

Though the country of the Agows of Damot is generally plain and laid out in paſture, each tribe has ſome mountain to which, upon the alarm of an enemy, they retire with their flocks. The Galla, being their neighbours on the other ſide of the Nile to the ſouth, and the Shangalla in the

low country immediately to the weſt, theſe natural fortreſſes are frequently of the greateſt uſe during the incurſions of both.

They alone, of all the nations of Abyſſinia, have found it their intereſt ſo far to cultivate their neighbours the Shangalla, that there are places ſet apart in which both nations can trade with each other in ſafety; where the Agows ſell copper, iron, beads, ſkins, or hides, and receive an immenſe profit in gold; for, below theſe to the ſouth and weſt, is the gold country neareſt Abyſſinia, none of that metal being anywhere found in Abyſſinia itſelf.

Yasous, from this country of the Agows, deſcended into that of the Shangalla; where, conforming to the ancient cuſtom of Abyſſinia, he hunted the elephant and rhinoceros, the ordinary firſt expedition in the kings his predeceſſors reigns, but the ſecond in his; the firſt having been (as before ſtated) ſpent in charity and mercy, much more nobly, at the foot of the mountain of Wechné.

Yasous is reported to have been the moſt graceful and dexterous horſeman of his time. He diſtinguiſhed himſelf in this hunting as much for his addreſs and courage againſt the beaſts, as he had, for a ſhort while before, done by his affability, generoſity, and benevolence, amidſt his own family. All was praiſe, all was enthuſiaſm, wherever the young king preſented himſelf; the ill-boding monks and hermits had not yet dared to foretel evil, but every common mouth predicted this was to be an active, vigorous, and glorious reign, without being thought by this to have laid any pretenſion to the gift of prophecy.

It

It was now the ſecond year of his reign when the king took the field with a ſmall, but very well choſen army. The Edjow and Woolo, two of the moſt powerful tribes of ſouthern Galla, taking advantage of the abſence of Ras Anaſtaſius, had entered Amhara by a paſs, on the ſide of which is ſituated Melec Shimfa, one of the principal towns of the province.

The king, leaving old Anaſtaſius to the government of Gondar, took upon himſelf the relief of Amhara; and, being joined by all the troops in his way, he arrived at Melec Shimfa before the Galla had any intelligence of him. The Galla always choſe for their reſidence a very level country, becauſe they are now become all horſemen. The country of Amhara, on the contrary, is full of high mountains, and only acceſſible by certain narrow paſſes. The king, therefore, inſtead of marching directly to the enemy, paſſed above them, and left them ſtill advancing, burning the villages and churches in the country below. He then took poſſeſſion of the paſs (through which he knew they muſt retreat) with a ſtrong body of troops; and filled the entrance of the defile, which was very rugged ground, with fuſileers, and his beſt foot armed with lances: after this, he ſeparated his horſe into two diviſions, and, reſerving one half to himſelf, gave the other to Kaſmati Demetrius. He then placed the troops conducted by himſelf in a wood, about half a mile from the entrance of the paſs, and ordered Demetrius to fall upon the Galla briſkly on the plain, but to retreat as if terrified by their numbers, and to make the beſt of his way then to the paſs in the mountains.

Demetrius, finding the enemy's parties ſcattered wide waſting the country, fell upon them, and ſlew many, till he had arrived near the middle of their body, when the Galla, uſed to ſuch expeditions, poured in from all ſides, and preſently united. Demetrius, ſurrounded on every ſide, was ſlain, fighting to the laſt in the moſt deſperate manner, and his party, much diminiſhed in number, fled in a manner that could not be miſtaken for ſtratagem. They were cloſely purſued, and followed into the paſs by the Galla, who thought they had thus entirely cut them off from Amhara. But they were ſoon received by a cloſe fire from the foot among the buſhes, and by the lances that mingled with them from every ſide of the mountain.

The king, upon the firſt noiſe of the muſquetry, advanced quickly with his horſe, and met the Galla, in the height of their confuſion, flying back again into the plain. Here they fell an eaſy ſacrifice to the freſh troops led by Yaſous, and to the peaſants, exaſperated by the havoc they before had made in the country. Of the enemy, about 6000 men fell this day on the field; a few were brought to Gondar, and, in contempt, ſold for ſlaves. Few on the king's ſide were ſlain, excepting thoſe that fell with Demetrius, the account of whoſe death the king heard without any ſigns of regret:—"I told the man (ſays the king) that he ſhould ſhew "himſelf and retire; if I wanted a victory I would have led "the army in perſon; I march againſt the Galla, not as a "king, but as an executioner, becauſe my aim is to extir-"pate them."

Although Yaſous was ſtedfaſt in his own opinion as to his religion, or, as it may be more properly called, the diſ-

putes and quibbles with the monks concerning it, yet he ſuffered each ſect to enjoy its own, and, probably, in his heart he perfectly deſpiſed both.

The monks, however, were far from poſſeſſing any ſuch ſpirit of toleration. They conſidered the depoſing of Acab Saat, Conſtantius, and the Itchegué Tzaga Chriſtos, as a declaration of diſlike the king entertained towards their party. They bore with great impatience and indignation, that Abuna Sanuda, who was once their zealous partizan in the time of Hannes, ſhould now ſuddenly change his ſentiments, and declare implicitly for thoſe of the king, and thereby increaſe both the number and the conſequence of their adverſaries. They declared that they would ſuffer every thing rather than live under a king who ſhewed himſelf ſo openly a favourer of Debra Libanos, though it was now but their turn, having in the laſt reign had a king more partial, and more attached to St Euſtathius, than ever Yaſous was to any ſet of monks whatever.

The ringleaders in all theſe ſeditious declarations were Abba Tebedin, ſuperior of the monaſtery of Gondga, and Kaſmati Wali of Damot, by origin a Galla. Theſe two turbulent men, having firſt drawn over to their party the Agows and province of Damot, paſſed over the Nile to Goodero and Baſſo, whom they joined, and then proclaimed king one Iſaac, grandſon of Socinios a prince, who was never ſent to the mountain, but whoſe predeceſſors, being at liberty when Facilidas firſt baniſhed his brothers and children to Wechné, had fled to the Galla, and there remained in obſcurity, waiting the juncture which now happened to declare his royal deſcent, and offer himſelf for king.

The Galla, who ſought but a pretence for invading Abyſſinia, readily embraced this opportunity, and ſwarmed to him on all ſides. His army, in a very ſhort time, was exceedingly numerous, and the Agows and all Damot were ready to join him when he ſhould repaſs the Nile. This revolt was indeed likely to have proved general, but for the activity and diligence of the king, who, on the firſt intelligence, put himſelf ſo ſuddenly in motion that he was on the banks of the Nile before the Galla on the one ſide were ready for their junction with the confederates on the other.

The king's preſence impoſed upon the Agows and the rebels of Damot, ſo that they let him paſs quietly over the Nile into the country of the Galla, hoping that, as their deſigns were not diſcovered, he might again return through their country in peace if victorious over the Galla; but, if he was beaten, they then were ready to intercept him.

But the Galla, who expected that they would have had to fight with an army already fatigued and half-ruined by an action with the Agows on the other ſide of the river, no ſooner ſaw it paſs the Nile unmoleſted in full force, than they began to think how far it was from their intereſt to make their country a ſeat of war, when ſo little profit was to be expected. On the approach, therefore, of the king's army, many of them deſerted to it, and made their peace with him. The few that remained faithful to Iſaac were diſperſed after very little reſiſtance; and he himſelf being taken priſoner, and brought before the king, was given up to the ſoldiers, who put him to death in his preſence. On

the king's ſide, no perſon of conſideration was ſlain but Kaſmati Maziré, and very few on the part of the enemy.

This year 1685, the 5th of Yaſous's reign, there was no military expedition. He had pardoned Abba Tebedin, and Kaſmati Wali, and the monks again deſired an aſſembly of the clergy, which was granted. But the king ſeeing, at its firſt meeting, that it was to produce nothing but wrangling and invectives; with great calmneſs and reſolution told the aſſembly, "That their diſputes were of a nature ſo confuſed and unedifying, that he queſtioned much their being really founded in ſcripture; and the rather ſo, becauſe the patriarch of Alexandria ſeemed neither to know, nor concern himſelf about them, nor was the Abuna, at his firſt coming, ever inſtructed on any one of theſe points. If they were, however, founded in ſcripture, one of them was confeſſedly in the wrong; and, if ſo, he doubted it might be the caſe with both; that he had, therefore, come to a reſolution to name ſeveral of the beſt-qualified perſons of both parties, who, in the preſence of the Itchegué and Abuna, might inſpect the books, and from them ſettle ſome premiſes that might be hereafter accepted and admitted as *data* by both."

This being aſſented to, the very next year he ordered two of the prieſts of Debra Libanos then at Gondar, together with Abba Tebedin, Coſmas of Aruana, the Abuna Sanuda, and the Itcheguè, forthwith to repair to Debra Mariam, an iſland in the lake Tzana, where, ſequeſtered from the world, they might diſcuſs their ſeveral opinions, and ſettle ſome points admiſſible by both ſides. After which, without giving any opportunity for reply, he diſſolved the aſſembly, and took the field with his army.

The

The king, though perfectly informed of the part that the whole province of Damot had taken in the rebellion of Iſaac, as alſo great part of the Agows, but moſt of all that tribe called Zeegam, yet had ſo well diſſembled, that moſt of them believed he was ignorant of their fault, and all of them, that he had no thoughts of puniſhing them, for he had returned through Damot, after the defeat of Iſaac, without ſhewing any mark of anger, or ſuffering his troops to commit the ſmalleſt hoſtility. He now paſſed in the ſame peaceable manner through the country of Zeegam, intending to attack the Shangalla of Geeſa and Wumbarea.

These two tribes are little known. Like the other Shangalla they are Pagans, but worſhip the Nile and a certain tree, and have a language peculiar to themſelves. They are woolly-headed, and of the deepeſt black; very tall and ſtrong, ſtraighter and better-made about the legs and joints than the other blacks; their foreheads narrow, their cheek-bones high, their noſes flat, with wide mouths, and very ſmall eyes. With all this they have an air of chearfulneſs and gaiety which renders them more agreeable than other blacks. Their women are very amorous, and ſell at a much greater price than other blacks of the ſex.

This country is bounded on the ſouth by Metchakel; on the weſt by the Nile; the eaſt by Serako, part of Gueſgué and Kuara; and, on the north, by Belay, Guba, and the Hamidge * of Sennaar. They make very frequent inroads, and

* A name of the black Pagans bordering on Sennaar to the ſouth-weſt.

and ſurpriſe the Agows, whoſe children they ſell at Guba to the Mahometans, who traffic there for gold and ſlaves, and get iron and coarſe cotton-cloths in return. Their country is full of woods, and their manner of life the ſame as has been already deſcribed in ſpeaking of the other tribes.

The Geeſa live cloſe upon the Nile, to which river they give their own name. It is alſo called Geeſa by the Agows, in the ſmall diſtrict of Geeſh, where it riſes from its ſource. They never have yet made peace with Abyſſinia, are governed by the heads of families, and live ſeparately for the ſake of hunting, and, for this reaſon, are eaſily conquered. The men are naked, having a cotton rag only about their middle. The nights are very cold, and they lie round great fires; but the fly is not ſo dangerous here as to the eaſtward, ſo that goats, in a ſmall number, live here. Their arms are bows, lances, and arrows; large wooden clubs, with knobs, nearly as big as a man's head, at the end of them; their ſhields are oval. They worſhip the Nile, but no other river, as I have ſaid before; it is called Geeſa, which, in their language, ſignifies the firſt Maker, or Creator. They imagine its water is a cure for moſt diſeaſes.

East of the Geeſa is Wumbarea, which reaches to Belay. The king fell firſt on the Geeſa, part of whom he took, and the reſt he diſperſed. He then turned to the right through Wumbarea, and met with ſome reſiſtance in the narrow paſſes in the mountains, in one of which Kaſmati Koſté, (one of his principal officers) a man of low birth, but raiſed by his merit to his preſent rank, was ſlain by an arrow.

The

The king then repaſſed the Agows of Zeegam, in the ſame peaceable manner in which he came, and then marched on without giving any cauſe of ſuſpicion, taking up his quarters at Ibaba. It was here he had appointed an aſſembly of the clergy to meet, before whom the ſeveral delegates, choſen to conſider the controverted points, and find ſome ground for a reconciliation, were to make their report. The Abuna, Itchegué, and all thoſe who, for this purpoſe, were ſhut up in Debra Mariam, appeared before the king. But, however amicably things had been carried on while they were ſhut up in the iſland, the uſual warmth and violence prevailed before the aſſembly. Ayto Chriſtos, Abba Welled Chriſtos of Debra Libanos, on one ſide, and Tebedin and Coſmas on the other, fell roundly, and without preface, upon a diſpute about the incarnation, ſo that the affair from argument was likely to turn to ſedition.

The turbulent Tebedin, leaving the matter of religion wholly apart, inveighed vehemently againſt the retirement to Debra Mariam, which he loudly complained of as baniſhment. Ras Anaſtaſius and Abuna Sanuda reproved him ſharply for the freedom with which he taxed this meaſure of the king, and in this they were followed by many of the wiſer ſort on both ſides. Immediately after the aſſembly, the king ordered Tebedin to be put in irons, and ſent to a mountainous priſon. He then returned to Gondar.

This year, the 9th of Yaſous reign, there appeared a comet, remarkable for its ſize and fiery brightneſs of its body, and for the prodigious length and diſtinctneſs of its tail. It was

was firſt taken notice of at Gondar, two days before the feaſt of St Michael, on which day the army takes the field. A ſight ſo uncommon alarmed all ſorts of people; and the prophets, who had kept themſelves within very moderate bounds during this whole reign, now thought that it was incumbent upon them to diſtinguiſh themſelves, and be ſilent no longer. Accordingly they foretold, from this phænomenon, and publiſhed everywhere as a truth infallibly and immutably pre-ordained, that the preſent campaign was to exhibit a ſcene of carnage and bloodſhed, more terrible and more extenſive than any thing that ever had appeared in the annals of Ethiopia. That theſe torrents of blood, which were everywhere to follow the footſteps of the king, were to be ſtopped by his death, which was to happen before he ever returned again to Gondar; and, as the object of the king's expedition was ſtill a ſecret, theſe alarming preſages gained a great deal of credit.

But it was not ſo with Yaſous, who, notwithſtanding he was importuned, by learned men of all ſorts, to put off his departure for ſome days, abſolutely refuſed, anſwering always ſuch requeſts by irony and deriſion: "Pho! Pho! "ſays he, you are not in the right; we muſt give the co- "met fair play; uſe him well, or he will never appear again, "and then idle people and old women will have nothing "to amuſe themſelves with."

He accordingly left Gondar at the time he had appointed; and he was already arrived at Amdaber, a few days diſtance from the capital, when an expreſs brought him word of his mother's death, on which he immediately marched back to Gondar, and buried her in the iſland of Mitraha with all

poſſible magnificence, and with every mark of ſincere grief.

Though the prophets had not juſt ſucceeded in what they foretold, they kept nevertheleſs a good countenance. It is true that no blood was ſhed, nor did the king die before he returned to Gondar; but his mother died when he was away, and that was much the ſame thing, for they contended that it was not a great miſtake, from the bare authority of a comet, to err only in the ſex of the perſon that was to die; a queen for a king was very near calculation. As for the bloody ſtory, and the king's death, they ſaid they had miſtaken the year in computing, but that it ſtill was to happen (when it pleaſed God) *ſome other time.*

Every body agreed that theſe explanations were the beſt poſſible, excepting the king, who perceived a degree of malice in the foretelling his death and certain loſs of his army juſt at the inſtant he was taking the field. But he diſguiſed his reſentment under ſtrong irony, with which he attacked theſe diviners inceſſantly. He had inquired accurately the day of his mother's death: "How is it, ſays he to his chaplain, (or kees hatzé) that this comet ſhould come to *foretel* my mother's death, when ſhe was dead four days before it appeared?" Another day, to the ſame perſon he ſaid, "I fear you do my mother too much honour at the expence of religion. Is it decent to ſuppoſe that ſuch a ſtar, the moſt remarkable appearance at the birth of Chriſt, ſhould now be employed on no greater errand than to foretel the death of the daughter of Guebra Maſcal?" Theſe, and many more ſuch railleries, accounted by theſe viſionaries,

aries, as little ſhort of impiety, ſo mortified Koſtè (the kees hatzé,) a great believer in, and protector of the dreamers, that he reſigned all his employments, and retired among the hermits into the deſert of Werk-leva towards Sennaar, to ſtudy the aſpects of the ſtars more accurately, and more at leiſure.

Though we neither pay this comet the ſuperſtitious reverence the idle fanatics of Abyſſinia ſhewed it, nor yet treat it with that contempt which this great king's good ſenſe prompted him to do, we ſhall make ſome uſe of it, acknowledging our gratitude to the hiſtorian who has recorded it. We ſhall hereby endeavour to eſtabliſh our chronology in oppoſition to that of the catholic writers, relating to the date of ſome tranſactions with which they were not cotemporaries, and only relate from hearſay, as happening before the arrival of the miſſionaries in this country.

Yasous the Great, of whom we are now writing, came to the throne upon the death of his father Hannes in 1680; the 9th year of this reign then was 1689.

Hedar is the 3d month of the Abyſſinians, and anſwers to part of our November; and the 12th of that month, Hedar, is the feaſt of St Michael the archangel, or 8th day of our month November, N. S.

Gondar is in lat. 12° 34′ 30″ N. and in long. 37° 33′ 0″ E. from the meridian of Greenwich. By the fiery appearance of the nucleus, or body of the comet, it certainly then was very near the ſun, and either was going down upon it to its

perihelion, or had already paſſed it, and was receding to its aphelion; but by its increaſing tail, already at a great length, we may conjecture it was only then going down to its conjunction, and was then near approaching to the ſun.

From this we ſhould conclude that this comet muſt have been ſeen, however rapidly it did move, ſome time before the 6th of November, or two days before the feaſt of St Michael. But this depends on the circumſtances of the climate; for though the tropical rains ceaſe the firſt of September, the cloudy weather continues all the month of October; at the end of theſe fall the latter rains in gentle ſhowers, which allay the fevers in Dembea, and make the country wholeſome for the march of the army, and theſe rains fall moſtly in the night. From this it is probable that the comet, having at firſt little light and no tail, as yet at a diſtance from the ſun, was not very apparent to the naked eye, till by its increaſed motion and heat it had acquired both tail and brightneſs, as it approached its perihelion.

Now we find by our European accounts *, that, in the year 1689, there did appear a comet, the orbit of which was calculated by M. Pingrè. And this comet arrived at its perihelion on the 1ſt day of December 1689, ſo was going down much inflamed, and with a violent motion to the ſun, the 6th of November, when it was obſerved at Gondar, being but 25 days then from its perihelion.

As theſe circumſtances are more than ſufficient to conſtitute the identity of the comet, a phænomenon too rare to riſk

* Aſtronom. de M. de La Lande, liv. 19. p. 366.

riſk being confounded with another, we may hardly conclude the 9th year of Yaſous the Firſt to be the year 1689 of Chriſt, ſuch as our chronology, drawn from the Abyſſinian annals, ſtates it to be; or, at leaſt, if there is any error, it muſt be ſo ſmall as to be of no ſort of conſequence to any ſort of readers, or influence upon the narrative of any tranſactions.

The 10th year began with a ſudden and violent alarm, which ſpread itſelf in an inſtant all over the kingdom without any certain authority. The Galla with an innumerable army were ſaid to have entered Gojam, at ſeveral places, and laid waſte the whole province, and this was the more extraordinary, as the Nile was now in the height of its inundation. On his march, the king learned that this ſtory aroſe merely from a panic; and this formidable army turned out no more than a ſmall band of robbers of that nation, who had paſſed the river in their uſual way, part on horſeback, while the foot were dragged over, hanging at the horſes tails, or riding on goats ſkins blown up with wind. This ſmall party had ſurpriſed ſome weak villages, killed the inhabitants, and immediately returned acroſs the river. But the alarm continued, and there were people at Gondar who were ready to ſwear they ſaw the villages and churches on fire, and a large army of Galla in their march to Ibaba, at the ſame time that there was not one Galla on the Gojam ſide of the river.

The king, however, either conſidering this ſmall body of Galla coming at this unſeaſonable time, and the panic that was ſo artificially ſpread, as a feint to throw him off his guard when a real invaſion might be intended, or with a

view to cover his own deſigns, ſummoned all the men of the province of Gojam to meet him in arms at Ibaba the 7th day of January, being the proper ſeaſon for preparing an expedition into the country of the Galla. He himſelf in the mean time retired to Dek, an iſland in the lake Tzana, there to ſtay till his army ſhould be collected.

While the king was in the iſland, a number of the malcontents among the monks, who had, in the ſeveral aſſemblies, been baniſhed for ſedition with Tebedin, came to him there, deſiring to be heard before an aſſembly; and they brought with them Arca Denghel, of Debra Samayat, to ſupport their petition. The king anſwered, that he was ready to call an aſſembly, provided the Abuna deſired, or would promiſe to be preſent; but that the Abuna was then at Debra Mariam, where they might go and know his mind.

The Abuna, who foreſaw little good could be expected from ſuch meetings, and knew how diſagreeable they were to the king, abſolutely refuſed to attend. On this they returned again to the king, deſiring that, of his own mere prerogative, he would call their aſſembly without conſulting further the Abuna. To this the king anſwered boldly, That he knew it was his right to call his ſubjects together, without any other reaſon for ſo doing but his will; yet, when the avowed cauſe of the meeting was to canvaſs matters of faith, he had made it a rule to himſelf, that the Abuna ſhould always be preſent, or at leaſt conſent to the meeting. And with this anſwer he ordered them all to depart immediately.

Many

MANY of the principal people about the king adviſed him to put theſe turbulent people in irons, for daring to come into his preſence without leave. But Yaſous was contented to remand each to the place of his baniſhment from whence he came. He then removed from Dek to Ibaba, on the 10th of January, the journey being no more than two eaſy days; but, whether it was that the Galla did not intend another invaſion, or whether they were overawed by the king's preparations and preſence, and did not think themſelves ſafe even in their own country, none of them this year paſſed the Nile, or gave any uneaſineſs either to Gojam or Damot.

THOUGH the whole nation believed that the king's attention was entirely engaged in the various expeditions againſt the Galla and Shangalla, which he executed with ſo much diligence and ſucceſs, yet there was ſtill a principal object ſuperior to all theſe, which remained a ſecret in his own breaſt, after the parties concerned had abſolutely forgot it. All his campaigns againſt the Shangalla were only deſigned to lull aſleep thoſe he conſidered as his principal enemies, that he might make the blow he aimed at them more certain and effectual.

SIX years had now paſſed ſince the Agows, and particularly the moſt powerful tribe of them, the Zeegam, had, with thoſe of Damot and the Galla, conſpired to put the crown upon the head of the rebel prince Iſaac, who had loſt his life in the engagement which followed on the other ſide of the Nile. It will be remembered alſo, that the country of the Agows is in general open, full of rich plains, abundantly watered by variety of fine ſtreams; in other parts, gentle

riſings and deſcents, but without mountains, ſaving that, almoſt in every tribe, Nature had placed one rugged mountain to which theſe people retired upon the approach of their neighbouring enemies the Galla and Shangalla. This deſcription does, in a more extenſive manner, belong to the country of the Zeegam, the moſt powerful, rich, and trading tribe of the whole nation.

Not one ſingle mountain, but a conſiderable ridge, divides the country nearly in the middle, the bottom of which, and nearly one-third up, is covered with bruſh-wood, full of ſtiff bamboos and canes, bearing prickly fruit, with aloes, acacia very thorny, and of ſeveral dwarf ſhrubby kinds, interſperſed with the kantuffa *, a beautiful thorn, which alone is conſidered, where it grows thick and in abundance, as a ſufficient impediment for the march of a royal army. Through theſe are paths known only to the inhabitants themſelves, which lead you to the middle of the mountain, where are large caves, probably begun by Nature, and afterwards enlarged by the induſtry of man. The mouths of theſe are covered with buſhes, canes, and wild oats, that grow ſo as to conceal both man and horſe, while the tops of theſe mountains are flat and well-watered, and there they ſow their grain out of the reach of the enemy. Upon the firſt alarm they drive the cattle to the top, lodge their wives and children in the caves, and, when the enemy approaches near, they hide the cattle in the caves likewiſe, ſome of which cavities are ſo large as to hold 500 oxen, and all the people to which they belong. The men then go down to the

* See the article *kantuffa* in the Appendix.

the loweſt part of the mountain, from whoſe thickets they ſally, upon every opportunity that preſents itſelf, to attack the enemy whom they find marauding in the plains.

The king had often aſſembled his army at Ibaba, only four days march from Zeegam. He had done more; he had paſſed below the country, and returned by the other ſide of it, in his attack upon Geeſa and Wumbarea; but he had never committed any act of hoſtility, nor ſhewn himſelf diſcontented with them. To deceive them ſtill farther, he ordered now his army to meet him at Eſté in Begemder; and ſent to Kaſmati Claudius, governor of Tigrè, to join him with all his forces as ſoon as he ſhould hear he was arrived at Lama, a large plain before we deſcend the ſteep mountain of Lamalmon, which ſtands not far from the banks of the river Tacazzé. He privately gave orders alſo to Kaſmati Claudius, Kaſmati Dimmo Chriſtos of Tigrè, and to Adera and Quaquera Za Menfus Kedus, to inform themſelves where the water lay below, and whether there was enough for his army in Betcoom, for ſo they call the territory of the eaſtern branch of Shangalla adjoining to Siré and Tigré. By this manœuvre the enemy was deceived, as the moſt intelligent thought he was to attack Laſta, and the others, that knew the ſecret of the water, were ſure his march was againſt the Shangalla.

The king began his march from Ibaba, and croſſed the Nile at the ſecond cataract below Dara, where there is a bridge; and, entering Begemder, he joined his army at Eſtè, which was going in a route directly from Agow and Damot towards Laſta. But no ſooner was he arrived at Eſté, than, that very night, he ſuddenly turned back the way he

came, and, marching through Maitſha, he croſſed the Nile, for the ſecond time, at Goutto, above the firſt cataract.

The morning of the 3d of May, the ſixth day of forced marches, without having encamped the whole way, he entered Zeegam at the head of his army. He found the country in perfect ſecurity, both people and cattle below on the plains and in the villages; and having put all to the ſword who firſt offered themſelves, and the principal of the conſpirators being taken priſoners, he ſold their wives and children at a public auction for ſlaves to the higheſt bidder. He then took the principal men among them along with him for ſecurity for paying ſix years tribute which they were in arrears, fined them 6000 oxen, which he ordered to be delivered upon the ſpot; and then collecting his army, he ſent to the chiefs of Damot to meet him before he entered their territory, and to bring ſecurity with them for the fine he intended to lay upon them, otherwiſe he would deſtroy their country with fire and ſword; and he advanced the ſame day to Aſſoa, ſouth of the ſources of the Nile, divided only from Damot by the ridge of mountains of Amid Amid.

The people of Damot, inhabiting an open level country without defence, had no choice but to throw themſelves on the king's mercy, who fined them 500 ounces of gold and 100 oxen, and took the principal people with him in irons as hoſtages.

He then returned, leaving the ſources of the Nile on his right, through Dengui, Fagitta, and Arooſi; croſſed the river Kelti, having the Agow and Atcheffer on his left, and returned

turned to Gondar by Dingleber. He then gave 2000 cattle to the churches of Tecla Haimanout and Yaſous, being neareſt the king's palace, to the Itchegué Hannes, the judges and principal ſervants of his houſehold, to all a ſhare, without reſerving one to himſelf. And the rains being now very conſtant, (for it was the 25th of June) he reſolved to continue the reſt of the winter in Gondar to regulate the affairs of the church.

This year the king reſumed his expedition againſt the Shangalla, towards which he had taken ſeveral preparatory ſteps, while he was projecting the ſurpriſe of the Zeegam. Theſe are the Troglodytes on the eaſtern part of Abyſſinia, towards the Red Sea, ſouth of Walkayt, Sire, Tigré, and Baharnagaſh, till they are there cut off by the mountains of the Habab. Theſe, the moſt powerful of all their tribes, are comprehended under the general name of *Dobenah*; the tribe Baaſa, which we have already ſpoken of as occupying the banks of the Tacazzé, are the only partners they have in the peninſula formed by that river and the Mareb. Their country and manner of life have been already abundantly deſcribed. It is all called Kolla, in oppoſition to Daga, which is the general name of the mountainous parts of Abyſſinia.

The king, being informed by Kafmati Claudius that there was water in great plenty at Betcoom, marched from Gondar the 29th of October to Deba, thence to Koſſoguè, after to Tamama. He then turned to the left to a village called Sidrè, nearer to the Shangalla. From this ſtation he forbade the lighting fires in the camp, and took the road leading to the Mareb; then turning to the left, the 1ſt of December he ſurpriſed a village called Kunya. The king

was the firſt who began the attack, and was in great danger, as Mazmur, captain of his guard, was killed by a lance at his ſide. But the ſoldiers ruſhing in upon ſight of the king's ſituation, who had already ſlain two with his own hand, the village was carried, and the inhabitants put to the ſword, refuſing all to fly, and fighting obſtinately to the laſt gaſp.

From Kunya the king proceeded rapidly to Tzaada Amba*, the largeſt and moſt powerful ſettlement of theſe ſavages. They have no water but what they get from the river Mareb, which, as I have elſewhere obſerved, riſes above Dobarwa, and, after making the circle of that town, loſes itſelf ſoon after in the ſand for a ſpace, then appears again, and, after a ſhort courſe, hides itſelf a ſecond time to the N. E. near the Taka, whoſe wells it ſupplies with freſh water. But in the rainy months it runs with a full ſtream, in a wide and deep bed, and unites itſelf to the Tacazzé, with it making the northmoſt point of the ancient iſland of Meroë.

The king met the ſame ſucceſs at Tzaada Amba that he had before experienced at Kunya, at which laſt village he paſſed the feaſt of the epiphany and benediction of the waters; a ceremony annually obſerved both by the Greek and Abyſſinian church, the intent of which has been ſtrangely miſtaken by foreigners.

From

* The white mountain.

From Kunya, his head-quarters, Yaſous attacked the ſeveral nations of which this is, as it were, the capital, Zacoba, Fadè, Qualquou, and Sahalé, and he returned again to Tzaada Amba, reſolving to complete their deſtruction. The remains of theſe miſerable people, finding reſiſtance vain, had hid themſelves in inacceſſible caves in the mountains, and the thickeſt parts of the woods, where they lay perfectly concealed in the day-time, and only ſtole out when thirſt obliged them at night. The king, who knew this, and that they had no other water but what they brought from the Mareb, formed a ſtrong line of troops along the banks of that river, till the greateſt part of the Shangalla of Tzaada Amba died with thirſt, or were taken or ſlain by the army.

His next enterprize was to attempt Betcoom, a large habitation of Shangalla eaſt of the Mareb, whoſe number, ſtrength, and reputation for courage, had hitherto prevented the Abyſſinians from moleſting them, never having touched, unleſs the fartheſt ſkirts of their country. The names of their tribes inhabiting Betcoom are, Baigada, Dadé, Ketfè, Kicklada, Moleraga, Megaerbé, Gana, Selé, Hamta, Shalada, Elmſi, and Lentè. The ſmall river of Lidda falling from a high precipice, when ſwelled with the winter rains, hollows out deep and large reſervoirs below, which it leaves full of water when the rains ceaſe, ſo that theſe people are here as well ſupplied with water as thoſe that dwell on the large rivers the Mareb and Tacazzè. This was a circumſtance unknown, till this ſagacious and provident king ordered the place to be reconnoitred by Kaſmati Claudius, then marched and encamped on the river

Lidda, which, after a ſhort but violent courſe, falls into the Mareb.

The Shangalla of Betcoom did nothing worthy of their reputation or numbers. They had already procured intelligence of the fate of great part of their nation, and had diſperſed themſelves in unknown and deſolate places. The king, however, made a conſiderable number of ſlaves of the younger ſort, and killed as many of the reſt as fell into his hands.

Leaving Betcoom, the army proceeded ſtill eaſtward; paſſed through the mountains of the Habab, into the low level country which runs parallel to the Red Sea, at the baſe of theſe mountains, where he ſpent ſeveral days hunting the elephant, ſome of which he ſlew with his own hand, and turned then to the left to Amba Tchou * and Taka.

The Taka are a nation of Shepherds living near the extremity of the rains. They are not Arabs, but live in villages, and were part formerly of the Bagla, or Habab; they ſpeak the language of Tigré, and are now reputed part of the kingdom of Sennaar.

While the king was at Taka, he received the diſagreeable news, that, after he had left the Shangalla on the Mareb, Muſtapha Gibberti, a Mahometan ſoldier in the ſervice of Kaſmati Faſa Chriſtos of Dedgin, had, with a ſmall number of men, ventured down, thinking that he ſhould ſurpriſe

* The mountain of ſalt.

priſe the Shangalla of Tzaada Amba, before they recovered from their late misfortune. This Muſtapha had ſlain two or three Shangalla with fire-arms; and at firſt they ſtood aloof as fearing the king. But finding ſoon that it was no part of his army, and only a ſmall body of adventurers, the Shangalla now collected in numbers, ſurrounded Muſtapha and his party, whom they cut off to a man; and, purſuing their advantage, they entered and took Dedgin, wounded Kaſmati Faſa Chriſtos, and put the inhabitants of the town to the ſword.

News of this misfortune were carried ſpeedily to Kaſmati Claudius, governor of Tigré: Caſſem, a Mahometan, led the Gibbertis, the people of that religion in the province; and, as he was an advanced party, came ſpeedily to blows with the Shangalla, and was cloſely engaged, with great appearance of ſucceſs, when Claudius came up with an army that would ſoon have put an end to the conteſt. But no ſooner was his army engaged with the Shangalla, than a panic ſeized him, and he ſounded a retreat; which, in an inſtant, became a moſt ſhameful flight. Caſſem and his gibbertis fell, fighting to the laſt man in the middle of their enemies. The Shangalla followed their advantage, and great part of the Abyſſinian army periſhed in the flight; Claudius, tho' he eſcaped, left his ſtandard, kettle-drums, and his whole province in poſſeſſion of the enemy.

The king, upon hearing this, returned haſtily into Siré; and his preſence eſtabliſhed order and tranquillity in that province, already half abandoned for fear of the Shangalla. From Sirè the king proceeded to Axum, where he celebrated

his victories over the Shangalla, by ſeveral days of feaſting and thankſgiving.

In the midſt of this rejoicing, news were brought that Murat, a ſervant of the king, whom he had diſpatched to India with merchandiſe, to bring ſuch commiſſions as he ſtood in need of, was arrived at Maſuah, where Muſa the Naybe, or Turkiſh governor of the iſland, had detained him, and ſeized his goods, under ſome vexatious pretences. There is not indeed a more mercileſs, thieviſh ſet of miſcreants, than in that government of Maſuah. But the king knew too well the few reſources that iſland had, to be long in applying a remedy, without moving from Axum; after being fully informed of the affair, in all its circumſtances, by Murat, he ſent to Abba Saluce, Guebra Chriſtos, and Zarabrook of Hamazen, the governors of the diſtricts, that as it were ſurround Maſuah, prohibiting all, upon pain of death, to ſuffer any proviſions to be carried by any perſon whatever into the iſland of Maſuah.

A severe famine inſtantly followed, which was to terminate in certain death, before any relief could come to them, unleſs from Abyſſinia. The Naybe Muſa, therefore, found into what a terrible ſcrape he had got; but hunger did not leave him a moment to deliberate. No third way remained, but either he muſt ſee the king, or die; and without heſitation he choſe the former. He, therefore, ſet out for Axum, bringing with him Murat and all the merchandiſes he had ſeized, as alſo ſeveral very conſiderable preſents for Yaſous himſelf, who accepted them, received his ſubmiſſion, and ordered the communication with Abyſſinia to be open

as

as before. This done, he diſmiſſed the Naybe, who returned to Maſuah in peace.

The next affair that came before the king was that of Kaſmati Claudius, (governor of Tigré) who was accuſed and found guilty of having fled while the battle with the Shangalla was yet undecided, leaving his ſtandard and kettle-drums in the power of the enemy. Beſides his preſent miſbehaviour, ſtrong prejudice exiſted againſt him, drawn from his former character; for it was averred, from very credible authority, that on one occaſion, upon a very ſlender appearance of ſedition, he ordered his troops to fire upon ſeveral prieſts of Axum, ſome of whom were killed on the ſpot. Beſides which, in the reign of Hatzè Hannes, he was found guilty of capital crimes committed at Emfras, condemned to die, and was already hanging upon the tree, when a very ſeaſonable reprieve arrived from the king, and he was thereupon cut down whilſt yet alive. Yaſous contented himſelf with depriving him of his employment, and afterwards ſending him to perpetual baniſhment.

The next brought to their trial were Za Woldo, and Adera and his ſons. Theſe laſt were very near relations to the king, for they were ſons of Ozoro Keduſet Chriſtos, daughter of Facilidas. They were accuſed of having deſerted their country and left it waſte to be over-run by wild beaſts, and a rendezvous for the Shangalla, who thence extended their incurſions as far as Waldubba. Of this there was ample proof againſt them, and they were therefore ſentenced to die, but the king commuted their puniſhment in-

to that of being impriſoned for life in a cave in the iſland of Dek.

As for the province of Sirè itſelf, he declared all the inhabitants and nobility, degraded from their rank, and all lands, whether feus from the king, or held by any other tenure, were confiſcated, reſumed by, and re-united to the crown. He then reduced the whole province from a royal government to a private one, and annexed it to the province of Tigrè, whoſe governor was to place over it a ſhum, or petty officer, without any enſigns of power. And, laſt of all, he gave the government of Tigrè to the Ras Feres, or maſter of the horſe, in room of Kaſmati Claudius degraded and baniſhed.

The many ſtriking examples which the king had lately given, one cloſe upon the other, of his own perſonal bravery, his impartial juſtice, his ſecrecy in his expeditions, and the certain vengeance that followed where it was deſerved, his puniſhment of the Zeegam, his expedition againſt the Shangalla, his affair with the Naybe Muſa, and his behaviour to the cowardly Claudius and daſtardly nobility of Sirè, fully convinced his ſubjects of all degrees, that neither family, nor being related to the crown, nor the ſtrength of their country, nor length of time ſince they offended, nor indeed any thing but a return to and continuance in their duty, could give them ſecurity under ſuch a prince. Thus ended the campaign of the Dobenah, ſpoke of to this day in Abyſſinia as the greateſt warlike atchievement of any of their kings. Twenty-ſix thouſand men are ſaid to have periſhed by thirſt when the king took poſſeſſion of the water at Tzaada Amba. And yet, notwithſtanding the ſmall-pox which,

which, in ſome places, exterminated whole tribes, the Dobenah have not loſt an inch of territory, but ſeem rather to be gaining upon Sirè.

YASOUS arrived at Dancaz on the 8th of March 1692, having diſmiſſed his army as he paſſed Gondar. From Dancaz he went to Laſta, and after a ſhort ſtay there, came to Arringo in Begemder. At this place the king received accounts that far exceeded his expectations, and gratified his warmeſt wiſhes. He had long endeavoured to gain a party among the Galla to divide them; and, though no marks of ſucceſs had yet followed, he ſtill had continued to uſe his endeavours.

ON his arrival at Arringo, he was met by a chief of the ſouthern Galla, called Kal-kend, who brought him advice that, while he was buſy with the Shangalla, an irruption had been made into Amhara by the Galla tribes of Liban and Toluma; that they, the king's friends, had come up with them at Halka, fought with them, and beat them, and freed Amhara entirely from all apprehenſion. The king, exceedingly rejoiced to ſee his moſt inveterate enemies become the defenders of his country, ordered the governor of Amhara to pay the Kal-kend 500 webs of cotton-cloth, 500 loads of corn, and eſcort both the men and the preſent till they were ſafely delivered in their own country.

THE 30th of June the king arrived at Gondar from Arringo, and immediately ſummoned an aſſembly of the clergy to meet and receive a letter from the patriarch of Alexandria, brought by Abba Maſmur of Agde, and Abba Dioſcuros of Maguena, who were formerly ſent to Egypt to

aſk the patriarch why he diſplaced Abuna Chriſtodulus, and appointed Abba Sanuda in his room, and deſiring that Abba Marcus ſhould be made Abuna, and Sanuda depoſed. The clergy met very punctually, and the patriarch's letter was produced in the aſſembly, the ſeal examined, and declared to be the patriarch's, and unbroken. The letter being opened by the king's order, it contained the patriarch's mandate to depoſe Abba Sanuda, and to put Marcus Abuna in his place, which was immediately done by command of the king.

While Yaſous was thus buſied in directing the affairs of his kingdom with great wiſdom and ſucceſs, both in church and ſtate, a matter was in agitation, unknown to him, at a diſtance from his dominions, which had a tendency to throw them again into confuſion.

Towards the end of the laſt century, there was ſettled at Cairo a number of Italian miſſionaries of the reformed Order of St Francis, who, though they lived in the ſame convent, and were maintained at the expence of the fathers of the Holy Land, yet did they ſtill pretend to be independent of the guardian of Jeruſalem, the ſuperior of theſe latter.

The expence of their maintenance, joined with their pretenſions to independence, gave great offence to thoſe religious of the Holy Land, who thereupon carried their complaints to Rome, offering to be at the whole charge of the miſſion of Egypt, and to furniſh from their own ſociety ſubjects capable of attending to, and extending the Chriſtian faith. This offer met with the deſired ſucceſs at Rome. The miſſion of Egypt, to the excluſion of every other

other Order, was given to the fathers of Jeruſalem, or the Holy Land, whom we ſhall henceforth call Capuchin friars. Theſe capuchins loſt no time, but immediately diſmiſſed the reformed Franciſcans, whom we ſhall hereafter diſtinguiſh by the name of Franciſcans, ſuffering only two of that Order to remain at Cairo.

The Franciſcans, thus baniſhed, returned all to Rome, and there, for ſeveral years together, openly defended their own cauſe, inſiſting upon the juſtice of their being replaced in the exerciſe of their ancient functions. This, however, they found abſolutely impoſſible. They were a poor Order, and the intereſt of the capuchins had ſtopped every avenue of the ſacred college againſt them. Finding, therefore, that fair and direct means could not accompliſh their ends, they had recourſe to others not ſo commendable, and by theſe they ſucceeded, and obtained their purpoſe. They pretended that, when the Jeſuits were chaſed out of Abyſſinia, a great number of Catholics, avoiding the perſecution, had fled into the neighbouring countries of Sennaar and Nubia; that they ſtill remained, moſt meritoriouſly preſerving their faith amidſt the very great hardſhips inflicted upon them by the infidels; but that, under theſe hardſhips, they muſt ſoon turn Mahometans, unleſs ſpiritual aſſiſtance was ſpeedily ſent them.

This repreſentation, as totally void of truth as ever fable was, was confirmed by the two Franciſcans, who ſtill remained at Cairo by permiſſion of the capuchins, or fathers of the Holy Land; and, when afterwards publiſhed at Rome, it excited the zeal of every bigot in Italy. All intereſted themſelves in behalf of theſe imaginary Chriſtians of Nubia;

bia; and pope Innocent XII. was ſo convinced of the truth of the ſtory, as to eſtabliſh a conſiderable fund to ſupport the expence of this, now called the Ethiopic miſſion, the ſole conduct of which remains ſtill with the reformed Franciſcans.

To take care of theſe fugitive Chriſtians of Nubia, though it was the principal, yet it was not the only charge committed to the fathers of his miſſion. They were to penetrate into Abyſſinia, and keep the ſeeds of the Romiſh faith alive there until a proper time ſhould preſent itſelf for converting the whole kingdom.

In order to this, a large convent was bought for them at Achmim, the ancient Panopolis in Upper Egypt, that here they might be able to afford a refreſhment to ſuch of their brethren as ſhould return weary and exhauſted by their preaching among the Nubian confeſſors; and, for further aſſiſtance, they had permiſſion to ſettle two of their Order at Cairo, independent of the fathers of the Holy Land, notwithſtanding the former excluſion.

Such is the ſtate of this miſſion at the preſent time. No Nubian Chriſtians ever exiſted at the time of their eſtabliſhment, nor is there one in being at this day. But if their proſelytes have not increaſed, their convents have. Achmim, Furſhout, Badjoura, and Negadè are all religious houſes belonging to this miſſion, although I never yet was able to learn, that either Heretic, or Pagan, or Mahometan, was ſo converted as to die in the Chriſtian faith at any one of theſe places; nor have they been much troubled with relieving their brethren, worn out with the toils of Abyſſinian

Abyſſinian journies, none of them, as far as I know, having ever made one ſtep towards that country; nor is this indeed to be regretted by the republic of letters, becauſe, beſides a poor ſtock of ſcholaſtic divinity, not one of them that I ſaw had either learning or abilities to be of the ſmalleſt uſe either in religion or diſcovery.

It was now the moſt brilliant period of the reign of Louis XIV. almoſt an Auguſtan age, and generally allowed ſo, both in France and among foreigners. Men of merit, of all countries and profeſſions, felt the effects of the liberality of this great encourager of learning; public works were undertaken, and executed ſuperior to the boaſted ones of Greece or Rome, and a great number and variety of noble events conſtituted a magnificent hiſtory of his reign, in a ſeries of medals. Religion alone had yet afforded no hint for theſe. His conduct in this matter, inſtead of that of a hero, ſhewed him to be a blind, bloody, mercileſs tyrant, madly throwing down in a moment, with one hand, what he had, with the aſſiſtance of great miniſters, been an age in building with the other. The Jeſuits, zealous for the honour of the king, their great protector, thought this a time to ſtep in and wipe away the ſtain. With this view they ſet upon forwarding a ſcheme, which might have furniſhed a medal ſuperior to all the reſt, had its inſcription been, "The Kings of Arabia and Saba ſhall bring gifts."

Father Fleuriau, a friend of father de la Chaiſe, the king's confeſſor, was employed to direct the conſul of Cairo, that he ſhould, in co-operation with the Jeſuits privately, ſend a fit perſon into Abyſſinia, who might inſpire the king of that country with a deſire of ſending an embaſſy into

France, and, upon the management of this political affair, they founded their hopes of getting themſelves replaced in the miſſion they formerly enjoyed, and of again ſuperſeding their rivals the Franciſcans, in directing all the meaſures to be taken for that country's converſion. But this required the utmoſt delicacy, for it was well known, that the court of Rome was very much indiſpoſed towards them, imputing to their haughtineſs, implacability, and imprudence, the loſs of Abyſſinia. Their conduct in China, where they tolerated idolatrous rites to be blended with Chriſtian worſhip, began alſo now to be known, and to give the greateſt ſcandal to the whole church. It was, therefore, neceſſary to make the king declare firſt in their favour before they began to attempt to conciliate the pope.

Louis took upon him the protection of this miſſion with all the readineſs the Jeſuits deſired; and the Jeſuit Verſeau was ſent immediately to Rome, with ſtrong letters to cardinal Janſen, protector of France, who introduced him to the pope.

Verseau knew well the conſequence of the protection with which he was honoured. At his firſt audience he declared, in a very firm voice and manner, to the pope, that the king had reſolved to take upon himſelf the conduct of the Ethiopic miſſion, and that he had caſt his eyes upon them (the Jeſuits) as the fitteſt perſons to be entruſted with the care of it, for *reaſons beſt known to himſelf.* The pope diſſembled; he extolled, in the moſt magnificent terms, the king's great zeal for the advancement of religion, approved of the choice he had made of the Jeſuits, and praiſed their reſolution as highly acceptable to him, immediately

ly conſenting that Verſeau, and five other Jeſuits, ſhould without delay paſs into Abyſſinia.

But it very ſoon appeared, that, however this might be the language of the pope, nothing could be more remote from his intentions; for, without the knowledge of the Jeſuits, or any way conſulting them, he appointed the ſuperior of the Franciſcans to be his legate a latere to the king of Abyſſinia, and provided him with preſents to that prince, and the chief noblemen of his court.

Some time afterwards, when, to prevent ſtrife or concurrence, the Jeſuits applied to the pope to receive his directions which of the two ſhould firſt attempt to enter Abyſſinia, the Franciſcans, or their own Order, the pope anſwered ſhortly, That it ſhould be thoſe who were moſt expert. Whether this apparent indiſpoſition of his Holineſs intimidated Verſeau is not known; but, inſtead of going to Cairo, he went to Conſtantinople, thence to Syria, to a convent of his Order of which he was ſuperior, and there he ſtaid. So that the Ethiopic miſſion at Cairo remained in the hands of two perſons of different Orders, the one Paſchal, an Italian Franciſcan friar, the other a Jeſuit and Frenchman, whoſe name was Brevedent.

Brevedent was a perſon of the moſt diſtinguiſhed piety and probity, zealous in promoting his religion, but neither imprudent nor raſh in his demonſtrations of it; affable in his carriage, chearful in his diſpoſition, of the moſt profound humility and exemplary patience. Beſides this, he was reputed a man of good taſte and knowledge in profane learning, and, what crowned all, an excellent mathe-

matician. He ſeems indeed to me to have been a copy of the famous Peter Paez, who firſt gave an appearance of ſtability to the Portugueſe converſion of Abyſſinia; like him he was a Jeſuit, but of a better nation, and born in a better age.

I MUST here likewiſe take notice of what I have already hinted, that in Abyſſinia the character of ambaſſador is not known. They have no treaties of peace or commerce with any nation in the world: But, for purpoſes already mentioned, factors are employed; and, Abyſſinia being everywhere ſurrounded by Mahometans, theſe of courſe have the preference; and, as they carry letters from their maſters, the cuſtom of the Eaſt obliges them to accompany theſe with preſents to the ſovereigns of the reſpective kingdoms through which they paſs, and this circumſtance dignifies them with the title of ambaſſador in the ſeveral courts at which they have buſineſs. Such was Muſa, a factor of the king, whom we have ſeen detained, and afterwards delivered by the Naybe of Maſuah, not many years before, in this king's reign; and ſuch alſo was Hagi Ali, then upon his maſter's buſineſs at Cairo, when M. de Maillet was conſul there, and had received his inſtructions from father Fleuriau at Paris, to bring about this embaſſy from Abyſſinia.

BESIDES his other buſineſs, Hagi Ali had orders to bring with him a phyſician, if poſſible, from Cairo; for Yaſous and his eldeſt ſon were both of a ſcorbutic habit, which threatened to turn into a leproſy. Hagi Ali, in former voyages, had been acquainted with a capuchin friar Paſchal; and, having received medicines from him before, he now applied to Paſchal to return with him into Abyſſinia, and

and undertake the cure of the king. Paſchal very readily complied with this, upon condition that he ſhould be allowed to take for his companion a monk of his own Order, friar Anthony; to which Hagi Ali readily conſented, happy in being enabled to carry two phyſicians to his maſter inſtead of one.

The French conſul was ſoon informed of this treaty with the friar Paſchal; and, having very eaſy means to bring Hagi Ali to his houſe, he informed him, that neither Paſchal nor Anthony were phyſicians, but that he himſelf had a man of his own nation, whoſe merit he extolled beyond any thing that had hitherto been ſaid of Hippocrates or Galen. Hagi Ali very willingly accepted of the condition, and it was agreed that, as Verſeau had not appeared, Brevedent above mentioned ſhould attend the phyſician as his ſervant.

This phyſician was Charles Poncet, a Frenchman, ſettled in Cairo, who was (as Mr Maillet ſays) bred a chymiſt and apothecary, and, if ſo, was neceſſarily better ſkilled in the effects and nature of medicine than thoſe are who call themſelves phyſicians, and practiſe in the eaſt. Nothing againſt his private character was intimated by the conſul at this time; and, with all deference to better judgment, I muſt ſtill think, that if Poncet did deſerve the epithets of drunkard, liar, babbler, and thief, which Maillet abundantly beſtows upon him towards the end of this adventure, the conſul could not have choſen a more improper perſon as the repreſentative of his maſter, nor a more probable one to make the deſign he had in hand miſcarry; nor could he, in this caſe, ever vindicate the preventing Paſchal's journey, who muſt have been much fitter for all the em-

ployments intended than ſuch a man as Poncet was, if one half is true of that which the conſul ſaid of him afterwards.

MAILLET, having ſo far ſucceeded, prevailed upon one Ibrahim Hanna, a Syrian, to write five letters, according to his own ideas, in the Arabic language, one of which was to the king, the four others to the principal officers at the court of Abyſſinia: doubting, however, whether Ibrahim's expreſſions were equal to the ſublimity of his ſentiments, he directed him to ſubmit the letters to the conſideration of one Francis, a monk, capuchin, or friar of the Holy Land. Ibrahim knew not this capuchin; but he was intimate with another Francis of the reformed Franciſcan Order, and to him by miſtake he carried the letters.

THESE Franciſcans were the very men from whom Mr de Maillet would have wiſhed to conceal the ſending Poncet with the Jeſuit Brevedent; but the ſecret being now revealed, Ibrahim Hanna was diſcharged the French ſervice for this miſtake; and Hagi Ali departing immediately after with Poncet and Brevedent, no time remained for the Franciſcans to take the ſteps they afterwards did to bring about the tragedy in the perſon of Poncet, which they completely effected in that of Mr Noir du Roule.

Mr PONCET, furniſhed with a cheſt of medicines at the expence of the factory, accompanied by father Brevedent, who, in quality of his ſervant, now took the name of Joſeph, joined Hagi Ali, and the caravan deſtined in the firſt place, to Sennaar the capital of Nubia.

PONCET,

PONCET ſet out from Cairo on the 10th of June of the year 1698, and, fifteen days after, they came to Monfalout, a conſiderable town upon the banks of the Nile, the rendezvous of the caravan being at Ibnah, half a league above Monfalout. Here they tarried for above three months, waiting the coming of the merchants from the neighbouring towns.

IN the afternoon of the 24th of September, they advanced above a league and a half diſtance, and took up their lodging at Elcantara, or the bridge, on the eaſtern bank of the Nile. A large caliſh, or cut, from the Nile ſtretches here to the eaſt, and, at that ſeaſon, was full of water, the inundation being at its height.

PONCET believes he was on the eaſtern banks of the Nile; but this is a miſtake. Siout and Monfalout, the cities he ſpeaks of, are both on the weſtern banks of that river; nor had the caravan any thing to do with the eaſtern banks, when their courſe was for many days to the weſt, and to the ſouthward of weſt. Nor was the bridge he paſſed a bridge over the Nile. There are no bridges upon that river from the Mediterranean till we arrive at the ſecond cataract near the lake Tzana in Abyſſinia. The amphitheatre and ruins he ſpeaks of are the remains of the ancient city Iſiu; and what he took for the Nile was a caliſh from the river to ſupply that city with water.

THE 2d of October the caravan ſet out in earneſt, and paſſed, as he ſays, into a frightful deſert of ſand, having firſt gone through a narrow paſſage, which he does not mention,

tion, amidſt thoſe barren, bare, and ſtony mountains which border the valley of Egypt on the weſt.

The 6th of October they came to El-Vah, a large village, or town, thick-planted with palm-trees, the Oaſis Parva of the ancients, the laſt inhabited place to the weſt that is under the juriſdiction of Egypt. By ſoftening the original name, Poncet calls this Helaoue, which, as he ſays, ſignifies *ſweetneſs*. But ſurely this was never given it from the productions he mentions to abound there, *viz.* ſenna and coloquintida. The Arabs call El-Vah a ſhrub or tree, not unlike our hawthorn either in form or flower. It was of this wood, they ſay, Moſes's rod was made when he ſweetened the waters of Marah. With a rod of this wood, too, Kaleb Ibn el Waalid, the great deſtroyer of Chriſtians, ſweetened theſe waters at El-Vah, once very bitter, and gave it the name from this miracle. A number of very fine ſprings burſt from the earth at El-Vah, which renders this ſmall ſpot verdant and beautiful, though ſurrounded with dreary deſerts on every quarter; it is ſituated like an iſland in the midſt of the ocean.

The caravan reſted four days at El-Vah to procure water and proviſions for the continuation of the journey thro' the deſert. Poncet's deſcription of the unpleaſantneſs of this, is perfectly exact, and without exaggeration. In two days they came to Cheb, where there is water, but ſtrongly impregnated with alum, as the name itſelf ſignifies; and, three days after, they reached Selima, where they found the water good, riſing from an excellent ſpring, which gives its name to a large deſert extending weſtward forty-five days journey to Dar Fowr, Dar Selè, and Bagirma, three ſmall

principalities of Negroes that live within the reach of the tropical rains.

At Selima they provided water for five days; and, on the 26th of October, having turned their courſe a little to the eaſtward, came to Moſcho, or Machou, a large village on the weſtern banks of the Nile, which Poncet ſtill miſtakes for the eaſtern, and which is the only inhabited place ſince the leaving El-Vah, and the frontiers of the kingdom of Dongola, dependent upon that of Sennaar. The Nile here takes the fartheſt turn to the weſtward, and is rightly delineated in the French maps.

Poncet very rightly ſays, this is the beginning of the country of the Barabra, or Berberians, (I ſuppoſe it is a miſtake of the printer when called in the narrative Barauras). The true ſignification of the term is *the land of the Shepherds*, a name more common and better known in the firſt dynaſties of Egypt than in more modern hiſtories. The Erbab (or governor) of this province received him hoſpitably, and kindly invited him to Argos, his place of reſidence, on the eaſtern or oppoſite ſide of the Nile, and entertained him there, upon hearing from Poncet that he was ſent for by the king of Abyſſinia.

After refreſhing themſelves eight days at Moſcho, they left it on the 4th of November 1698, and arrived at Dongola on the 13th of the ſame month. The country which he paſſed along the Nile is very pleaſant, and is deſcribed by him very properly. It does not owe its fertility to the overflowing of the Nile, the banks of that river being conſiderably too high. It is watered, however, by the induſtry

duſtry of the inhabitants, who, by different machines, raiſe water from the ſtream.

We are not to attribute to Poncet, but to thoſe who publiſhed, the ſtory here put into father Brevedent's mouth about the fugitive Chriſtians in Nubia, which fable gave riſe to the firſt inſtitution of the Ethiopic miſſion. "It drew tears, "ſays he, from the eyes of father Brevedent, my dear com- "panion, when he reflected that it was not long ſince this "was a Chriſtian country; and that it had not loſt the faith "but only for want of ſome perſon who had zeal enough "to conſecrate himſelf to the inſtruction of this abandoned "nation." He adds, that upon their way they found a great number of hermitages and churches half ruined; a fiction derived from the ſame ſource.

Dongola was taken, and apoſtatized early, and the ſtones of hermitages and churches had long before this been carried off, and applied to the building of moſques. Father Brevedent, therefore, if he wept for any ſociety of Chriſtians at Dongola, muſt have wept for thoſe that had periſhed there 500 years before.

Poncet was much careſſed at Dongola for the cures he made there. The Mek, or king, of that city wiſhed him much to ſtay and ſettle there; but deſiſted out of reſpect, when he heard he was going to the emperor of Ethiopia. Dongola, Poncet has placed rightly on the eaſtern bank of the Nile, about lat. 20° 22′.

The caravan departed from Dongola on the 6th of January 1699; four days after which they entered into the kingdom

of Sennaar, where they met Erbab Ibrahim, brother of the prime miniſter, and were received civilly by him. He defrayed their expences alſo as far as Korti, where they arrived the 13th of January.

Our travellers from Korti were obliged to enter the great deſert of Bahiouda, and croſs it in a S. E. direction till they came to Derreira, where they reſted two days, which, Poncet ſays, was done to avoid the Arabs upon the Nile. Theſe Arabs are called Chaigie; they inhabit the banks of that river to the N. E. of Korti, and never pay the king his revenue without being compelled and very ill-treated.

The country about Derreira is called Belled Ullah, from the cauſe of its plenty rather than the plenty itſelf. This ſmall diſtrict is upon the very edge of the tropical rains, which it enjoys in part; and, by that, is more fruitful than thoſe countries which are watered only by the induſtry of man. The Arabs of theſe deſerts figuratively call rain Rahamet Ullah, 'the mercy of God', and Belled Ullah, 'the country which enjoys that mercy.'

Some days after the caravan came to Gerri. Poncet ſays, the uſe of this ſtation was to examine caravans coming from the northward, whether they had the ſmall-pox or not. This uſage is now diſcontinued by the decay of trade. It muſt always have ſerved little purpoſe, as the infection oftener comes in merchandiſe than by paſſengers. At Gerri great reſpect was ſhewn to Poncet, as going to Ethiopia.

I cannot conceive why Poncet ſays, that, to avoid the great

great windings of the Nile, he ſhould have been obliged to travel to the north-eaſt. This would have plainly carried him back to the deſert of Bahiouda, and the Arabs: his courſe muſt have been S. W. to avoid the windings of the Nile, becauſe he came to Herbagi, which he deſcribes very properly as a delicious ſituation. The next day they came to Sennaar.

The reader, I hope, will eaſily perceive that my intention is not to criticiſe Mr Poncet's journey. That has been done already ſo illiberally and unjuſtly that it has nearly brought it into diſrepute and oblivion. My intention is to illuſtrate it; to examine the facts, the places, and diſtances it contains; to correct the miſtakes where it has any, and reſtore it to the place it ought to hold in geography and diſcovery. It was the firſt intelligible itinerary made through theſe deſerts; and I conceive it will be long before we have another; at any rate, to reſtore and eſtabliſh the old one will, in all ſenſible minds, be the next thing to having made a ſecond experiment.

He ſurely is in ſome degree of miſtake about the ſituation of Sennaar when he ſays it is upon an eminence. It is on a plain cloſe on the weſtern banks of the Nile. A ſmall error, too, has been made about its latitude. By an obſervation ſaid to have been made by father Brevedent, the 21ſt of March 1699, he found the latitude of Sennaar to be 13° 4′ north. The French maps, the moſt correct we have in all that regards the eaſt, place this capital of Nubia in lat. 15° and a few minutes. But the public may reſt aſſured, that the correct latitude of Sennaar, by a mean of very ſmall differences

ences of near fifty obſervations, made with a three-feet braſs quadrant, in the courſe of ſeveral months I ſtaid in that town, is lat 13° 34′ 36″ north.

WHAT I have to ſay further concerning Sennaar will come more naturally in my own travels; and I ſhall only ſo far conſider the reſt of Poncet's route, as to explain and clear it from miſtakes, Sennaar being the only point in which our two tracts unite.

I SHALL beg the reader to remark, that, from the time of Poncet's ſetting out of Egypt till his arrival at Sennaar, ſo far was he from being ill-looked upon, or any bad conſtruction being put upon his errand, that he was, on the contrary, reſpected everywhere, as going to the king of Abyſſinia. It never was then imagined he was to dry up the Nile, nor that he was a conjurer to change its courſe, nor that he was to teach the Abyſſinians to caſt cannon and make war, nor that he was loaded with immenſe ſums of money. Theſe were all *piæ fraudes*, lies invented by the prieſts and friars to incite theſe ignorant barbarians to a crime which, though it paſſed unrevenged, will juſtly make theſe brethren in iniquity the deteſtation of men of every religion in all ages.

PONCET left Sennaar the 12th of May 1699, and croſſed the Nile at Baſboch, about four miles above the town, where he ſtopped for three days. This he calls a fair village; but it is a very miſerable one, conſiſting of ſcarce 100 huts, built of mud and reeds.

He departed the 15th in the evening, and travelled all the night as far as Bacras, and arrived the day after at Abec; then at Baha, a long day's journey of about ten hours. He is miſtaken, however, when he ſays Baha is ſituated upon the banks of the Nile, for it is upon a ſmall river that runs into it. But, at the ſeaſon he paſſed it, moſt of thoſe rivers were dried up.

On the 19th he came to Dodar, a place as inconſiderable as Baha; then to Abra, a large village; then to Debarke and Enbulbul. On the 25th they came to Gieſim. Gieſim is a large village ſituated upon the banks of the Nile, in the middle of a foreſt of trees of a prodigious height and ſize, all of which are loaded with fruit or flowers, and crowded with paroquets, and variety of other birds, of a thouſand different colours. They made a long ſtay at this place, not leſs than nineteen days.

In this interval, father Brevedent is ſaid to have made an obſervation of the latitude of the place, which, if admitted, would throw all the geography of this journey into confuſion. Poncet ſays, that Gieſim is half-way between Sennaar and the frontiers of Ethiopia, and that a ſmall brook, a little beyond Serké, is the boundary between thoſe ſtates. Now, from Sennaar to Gieſim are nine ſtages, and one of them we may call a double one, but between Gieſim and Serkè, only four; Gieſim then cannot be half way between Sennaar and Serkè.—Again, the latitude of Sennaar is 13° 4′ north, according to Brevedent, or rather 13° 34′. Now, if the latitude of Gieſim be 10°, then the diſtance between Sennaar and it muſt be about 250 miles which they

had travelled in eight days, or more than thirty miles a-day, which, in that country, is abſolutely impoſſible.

But what muſt make this evident is, that we know certainly that Gondar, the metropolis to which they were then going, is in lat. 12° 34′ north. Gieſim then would be ſouth of Gondar, and the caravan muſt have paſſed it when the obſervation was made. But they were not yet arrived at the confines of Sennaar, much leſs to the capital of Abyſſinia, to which they were indeed advancing, but were ſtill far to the northward of it. There is a miſtake then in this obſervation which is very pardonable, Brevedent being then ill of a mortal dyſentery, which terminated in death ſoon after. We ſhall, therefore, correct this error, making the latitude of Gieſim 14° 12′ north, about 110 Engliſh miles from Sennaar, and 203 from Gondar.

The 11th of June they ſet out from Gieſim for Deleb, then to Chow, and next to Abotkna. They reſted all night, the 14th, in the delightful valley of Sonnone, and, two days after, they came to Serkè, a large town of trade, where there are many cotton weavers. Here ends the kingdom of Sennaar, the brook without this town being the boundary of the two ſtates.

Arrived now in Abyſſinia, they halted at Tambiſſo, a village which belongs to the Abuna; next at Abiad, a village upon the mountain. On the 23d they ſtopped in a valley full of canes and ebony-trees, where a lion carried away one of their camels. On the 24th they paſſed the Gandova, a large, violent, and dangerous river. The country being prodigiouſly woody, one of their beaſts of carriage, ſtraggling

ſtraggling from the caravan, was bit on the hip by a bear, as Mr Poncet apprehends. But we are now in the country correſponding to that inhabited by the Shangalla, that is one of the hotteſt in the world, where the thermometer riſes to 100° in the ſhade. Bears are not found in climates like this; and moſt aſſuredly there are none even in the higher and colder mountains above. Poncet does not ſay he ſaw the bear, but judged only by the bite, which might have been that of a lion, leopard, or many other animals, but more probably that of the hyæna.

The 27th they arrived at Girana, a village on the top of a mountain. Here they left their camels, and began to aſcend from the Kolla into the more temperate climate in the mountains of Abyſſinia. From Girana they came to Barangoa, and the next day to Tchelga, where anciently was the cuſtomhouſe of Sennaar while peace and commerce ſubſiſted between the two kingdoms. The 3d of July they arrived at Barcos, or Bartcho, about half a day's journey from Gondar; and on the 9th of Auguſt father Brevedent died. Poncet was himſelf detained by indiſpoſition at this village of Barcos till the 21ſt of July, on which day he ſet out for Gondar and arrived in the evening, where he ſucceeded to his wiſhes, performing a complete cure upon his royal patient in a very ſhort time; and ſo fulfilled this part of his miſſion as perfectly as the ableſt phyſician could have done.

As for the other part with which he was charged, I doubt very much if it was in his power to perform it in another manner than he did. It required a mind full of ignorance and preſumption, ſuch as was that of Mr de Maillet and all

the miſſionaries at the head of whom he was, to believe that it was poſſible for a private man, ſuch as Poncet, without language, without funds, without preſents, or without power or poſſibility of giving them any ſort of protection in the way, to prevail upon 26 or 28 perſons, on the word of an adventurer only, to attempt the traverſing countries where they ran a very great riſk of falling into ſlavery—to do what? why, to go to France, a nation of Franks whoſe very name they abhorred, that they might be inſtructed in a religion they equally abhorred, to meet with certain death if ever they returned to their own country; and, unleſs they did return, they were of no ſort of utility whatever.

M. de Maillet ſhould have informed himſelf well in the beginning, if it was poſſible that the nobility in Abyſſinia could be ſo contemptible as to ſuffer twelve of their children to go to countries unknown, upon the word of a ſtranger, at leaſt of ſuch a doubtful character as Poncet. I ſay doubtful, becauſe, if he was ſuch a man as M. de Maillet repreſents him, a drunkard, a liar, a thief, a man without religion, a perpetual talker, and a ſuperficial practitioner of what he called his own trade, ſurely the Abyſſinians muſt have been very fond of emigration, to have left their homes under the care of ſuch a patron as this. When did M. de Maillet ever hear of an Abyſſinian who was willing to leave his own country and travel to Cairo, unleſs the very few prieſts who go for duty's ſake, for penances or vows, to Jeruſalem? When did he ever hear of an Abyſſinian layman, noble, or plebeian, attending even the Abuna though the firſt dignitary of the church? We ſhall ſee preſently a poor ſlave, a Chriſtian Abyſſinian boy, immediately under the protection of M. de Maillet, and going directly from him into the preſence

ſence of his king, taken forcibly from the chancellor of the nation *, and made a Mahometan before their eyes.

The Abyſſinian embaſſy then demanded from France, and recommended to M. de Maillet, was a preſumptuous, vain, impracticable chimera, which muſt have ended in diſappointment, and which never could have cloſed more innocently than it did.

I shall paſs over all that happened during Poncet's ſtay at Gondar, as he did not underſtand the language, and muſt therefore have been very liable to miſtake. But as for what he ſays of armies of 300,000 men; of the king's dreſs at his audience; of his mourning in purple; of the quantity of jewels he had, and wore; of his having but one wife; and of large ſtone-croſſes being erected on the corners of the palace at Gondar; theſe, and ſeveral other things, ſeem to me to have been ſuperadded afterwards. Nor do I think what is ſaid of the churches and Chriſtians remaining in the kingdom of Dongola, nor the monſtrous lie about the golden rod ſuſpended in the air in the convent of Biſan †, is at all the narrative of Poncet, but of ſome fanatic, lying friar, into whoſe poſſeſſion Poncet's manuſcript might have fallen. The journey itſelf, ſuch as I have reſtored it, is certainly genuine; and, as I believe it deſcribes the beſt and ſafeſt way into Abyſſinia, I have rectified ſome of the few errors it had, and now recommend it to all future travellers, and to the public.

This

* By Chancellor of the Nation is meant the officer immediately next the conſul, who keeps the records, and has a department abſolutely independent of the Conſul.

† Vid. Poncet.

This is to be underſtood of his travels to Abyſſinia, his journey in returning being much more inaccurate and incomplete, the reaſon of which we have in his own words: "I have not, ſays he, exactly noted down the places through "which we paſſed, the great weakneſs I then lay under not "permitting me to write as I could have wiſhed." I ſhall, therefore, ſay little upon his return, as the deficiency will be carefully ſupplied by the hiſtory of my own journey from Maſuah, the road by which he left the country being very nearly the ſame as that by which I entered.

It was on the 2d of May of the year 1700 that Poncet left Gondar and took his journey to the town of Emfras. Here there is a miſtake in the very beginning. Emfras *, at which place I ſtaid for ſeveral weeks, is in lat. 12° 12′ 38″, and long. 37° 38′ 30″, conſequently about 22 miles from Gondar, almoſt under the ſame meridian, or ſouth from it; ſo that, as he was going to the eaſt, and northward of eaſt, this muſt have been ſo many miles out of his way; for, going towards Maſuah, his firſt ſtation muſt have been upon the river Angrab.

The ſame may be ſaid of his next to Coga. It was a royal reſidence indeed, but very much out of his way. He has forgot likewiſe, when he ſays, that, in the way from Gondar to Emfras, you muſt go over a very high mountain. The way from Gondar to Emfras is the beaten way to Begemder, Foggora, and Dara, and ſo on to the ſecond cataract of the Nile. It is on that plain the armies were encamped

* It is plain Poncet had no inſtruments for obſervation with him, nor was he probably acquainted with the uſe of them.

before the battle of Serbraxos *, whence the road paſſes by Correva, which is indeed upon a riſing ground, ſloping gently to the lake Tzana, but is not either mountain or hill.

Seven or eight days are a ſpace of time juſt enough for the paſſing through Woggora, where he juſtly remarks the heats are not ſo exceſſive as in the places he came from. He takes no notice of the paſſage of Lamalmon, which ought to have been very ſenſible to a man in a decayed ſtate of health, the leſs ſo as he was only deſcending it. Every thing which relates to the paſſage of the Tacazzé is juſt and proper, only he calls the river itſelf the Tekeſel, inſtead of the true name, the *Tacazzé*. It was the Siris of the ancients; and it is doing juſtice to both countries, when he compares the province of Siré with the moſt delicious parts of his own country of France. This province is that alſo where he might very probably receive the young elephant, which he ſays awaited him there as a preſent to the king of France, and which died a few days after.

He paſſed afterwards to Adowa. It is the capital of Tigré, is ſtill the ſeat of its governor, and was that of Ras Michael in my time. All that he ſays of the intermediate country and its productions, ſhew plainly that his work is genuine, and his remarks to be thoſe of an eye-witneſs.

From this province of Tigré he enters the country of the Baharnagaſh, and arrives at Dobarwa, which he erroneouſ-

ly

* To be deſcribed hereafter.

ly calls Duvarna, and ſays it is the capital of the province of Tigrè, whereas it is that of the Baharnagaſh. Iſaac Baharnagaſh, when in rebellion againſt his ſovereign, ſurrendered this town to the Turks in the year 1558, as may be ſeen at large in my hiſtory of the tranſactions of thoſe times.

As the authenticity of this journey, and the reality of Poncet's having been in Abyſſinia, has been queſtioned by a ſet of vain, ignorant, fanatic people, and that from malice only, not from ſpirit of inveſtigation, of which they were incapable, I have examined every part of it, and compared it with what I myſelf ſaw, and ſhall now give one other inſtance to prove it genuine, from an obſervation Poncent has made, and which has eſcaped all the miſſionaries, though it was entire and viſible in my time.

Among the ruins of Axum * there is a very high obeliſk, flat on both ſides, and fronting the ſouth. It has upon it no hieroglyphic, but ſeveral decorations, or ornaments, the fancy of the architect. Upon a large block of granite, into which the bottom of it is fixed, and which ſtands before it like a table, is the figure of a Greek patera, and on one ſide of the obeliſk, fronting the ſouth, is the repreſentation of a wooden door, lock, and a latch to it, which firſt ſeems deſigned to draw back and then lift up, exactly in the manner thoſe kind of locks are faſhioned in Egypt at this very day. Poncet obſerved very juſtly, there are no ſuch locks made uſe of

* See an elevation of this in my account of Axum.

in Abyſſinia, and wonders how they ſhould have repreſented a thing they had never ſeen, and, having done ſo, remained ſtill incapable to make or uſe it. Poncet was no man of reading out of his own profeſſion; he nowhere pretends it; he recorded this fact becauſe he ſaw it, as a traveller ſhould do, and left others to give the reaſon which he could not. Poncet calls this place Heleni, from a ſmall village of that name in the neighbourhood. Had he been a ſcholar he would have known that the ruins he was obſerving were thoſe of the city of Axum, the ancient metropolis of this part of Ethiopia.

Ptolemy Evergetes, the third Grecian king of Egypt, conquered this city and the neighbouring kingdom; reſided ſome time there; and, being abſolutely ignorant of hieroglyphics, then long diſuſed, he left the obeliſk he had erected for aſcertaining his latitudes ornamented with figures of his own chooſing, and the inventions of his ſubjects the Egyptians, and particularly the door for a convenience of private life, to be imitated by his new-acquired ſubjects the Ethiopians, to whom it had hitherto been unknown.

From Dobarwa he arrived at Arcouva, which, he ſays, geographers miſcal Arequies. M. Poncet might have ſpared this criticiſm upon geographers till he himſelf had been better informed, for both are equally miſcalled, whether Arcouva or Arequies. The true and only name of the place, known either to Mahometans or Chriſtians, is Arkeeko, as the iſland to which he paſſed, croſſing an arm of the ſea, is called Maſuah, not Meſſoua, as he everywhere ſpells it.

From

From Maſuah, Poncet croſſed the Red Sea to Jidda, paſſing the iſland Dahalac and Kotumbal, a high rock, the name of which is not known to many navigators.

Had old Murat, Muſa, and Hagi Ali, happened at that time to have been upon ſome mercantile errand to Cairo, there is no doubt but they would have been preferred and become ambaſſadors to France. They would have gone there, perplexed the miniſter and the conſul with a thouſand lies and contrivances, which the French never would have been able to unravel; they would have promiſed every thing; obtained from the king ſome conſiderable ſum of money, on which they would have undertaken to ſend the embaſſy in any form that was preſcribed, and, after their return home, never been heard of more. But thoſe worthies were, probably, all employed at this time; therefore the only thing Poncet could do was to bring Murat, ſince he was to procure at all events an ambaſſador.

He had been a cook to a French merchant at Aleppo; was a maker of brandy at Maſuah; and probably his uncle old Murat's ſervant at the time. But he was not the worſe ambaſſador for this. Old Murat, Hagi Ali, and Muſa, had perhaps been alſo cooks and ſervants in their time. Prudence, ſobriety, and good conduct, ſkill in languages, and acquaintance, with countries recommended them afterwards to higher truſts. Old Murat probably meant that his nephew ſhould begin his apprenticeſhip with that embaſſy to France; and M. Poncet, to increaſe his conſequence, and fulfil the commiſſion the conſul gave him, allowed him to invent all the reſt.

Poncet,

Poncet, from Jidda, went to Tor, and thence to Mount Sinai, where, after ſome ſtay, being overtaken by Murat, they both made their entry into Cairo.

M. de Maillet, the conſul, was an old Norman gentleman, exceedingly fond of nobility, conſequently very haughty and overbearing to thoſe he reckoned his inferiors, among which he accounted thoſe of his own nation eſtabliſhed at Cairo, though a very amiable and valuable ſet of men. He was exceedingly teſty, choleric, obſtinate, and covetous, though ſagacious enough in every thing concerning his own intereſt. He lived for the moſt part in his cloſet, ſeldom went out of his houſe, and, as far as I could learn, never out of the city. There, however, he wrote a deſcription of all Egypt, which ſince has had a conſiderable degree of reputation *.

Maillet had received advice of the miſerable ſtate of this embaſſy from Jidda, that the Sherriffe of Mecca had taken from Poncet, by force, two female Abyſſinian ſlaves, and that the elephant was dead; which particulars being written to France, he was adviſed in a letter from father Fleuriau by no means to promote any embaſſy to the court of Verſailles; that a proper place for it was Rome; but that in France they looked upon it in the ſame light as they did upon an embaſſy from Algiers or Tunis, which did no honour to thoſe who ſent it, and as little to thoſe that received it; this, however, was a new light.

M. de

* And there he wrote his Teliamede which ſuppoſes men were firſt created fiſhes, for which he was excommunicated. It was an opinion perfectly worthy of alarming the Sorbonne.

M. DE MAILLET, by this letter, becoming maſter of the ambaſſador's deſtiny, began firſt to quarrel with him upon etiquette, or who ſhould pay the firſt viſit; and, after a variety of ill-uſage, inſiſted upon ſeeing his diſpatches. This Murat refuſed to permit, upon which the conſul ſent privately to the baſha, deſiring him to take the diſpatches or letters from Murat, ſending him at the ſame time a conſiderable preſent.

THE baſha on this did not fail to extort a letter from Murat by threats of death. He then opened it. It was in Arabic, in very general and indifferent terms, probably the performance of ſome Moor at Maſuah, written at Murat's inſtance. And well was it for all concerned that it was ſo; for had the letter been a genuine Abyſſinian letter, like thoſe of the empreſs Helena and king David III. propoſing the deſtruction of Mecca, Medina, and the Turkiſh ſhips on the Red Sea, the whole French nation at Cairo would have been maſſacred, and the conſul and ambaſſador probably impaled.

THE Jeſuits, ignorant of this manœvure of M. de Maillet, but alarmed and ſcandalized at this breach of the law of nations, for ſuch the baſha's having opened a letter, addreſſed to the king of France, was juſtly conſidered, complained to M. Feriol the French ambaſſador at Conſtantinople, who thereupon ſent a capigi from the port, to inquire of the baſha what he meant by thus violating the law of nations, and affronting a friendly power of ſuch conſequence as France.

These capigis are very unwelcome gueſts to people in office to whom they are ſent. They are always paid by thoſe they are ſent to. Beſides this, the report they carry back very often coſts that perſon his life. The baſha, accuſed by the capigi at the inſtance of the French ambaſſador at Conſtantinople, anſwered like an innocent man, That he had done it by deſire of the French conſul, from a wiſh to ſerve him and the nation, otherwiſe he ſhould never have meddled in the matter. The conſequence was, M. de Maillet was obliged to pay the baſha the expence of the capigi; and, having ſome time afterwards brought it in account with the merchants, the French nation at Cairo, by deliberation of the 6th of July of the year 1702, refuſed to pay 1515 livres, the demand of the baſha, and 518 livres for thoſe of his officers.

The conſul, however, had gained a complete victory over Murat, and thereupon determined to ſend Monhenaut, chancellor of France at Cairo, with letters, which, though written and invented by himſelf, he pretended to be tranſlations from the Ethiopian original.

But father Verſeau, the Jeſuit, now returned to Cairo, who had entered into a great diſtruſt of the conſul ſince the diſcovery of his intrigue with the baſha about Murat's letter, reſolved to be of the party. Poncet, who was likewiſe on bad terms with the conſul, neither inclined to loſe the merits of his travels into Abyſſinia, nor truſt the recital of it to Monhenaut, or to the manner in which it might be repreſented in the conſul's letters. Theſe three, Monhenaut, Poncet, and Verſeau, ſet out therefore for Paris with very different views and deſigns. They embarked at Bulac, the

ſhipping-place of Cairo upon the Nile, taking with them the ears of the dead elephant.

The remaining part of the preſent brought for the king of France by this illuſtrious embaſſy, was an Abyſſinian boy, a ſlave bought by Murat, and who had been hid from the ſearch of the Sheriffe, when he forcibly took from him the two Abyſſinian girls, part of the intended preſent alſo. This boy no ſooner embarked on board the veſſel at Bulac than a great tumult aroſe. The janizaries took the boy out of the veſſel by force, and delivered him to Muſtapha Cazdagli, their kaya; nor could all the intereſt of M. de Maillet and the French nation, or all the manœuvres of the Jeſuits, ever recover him.

As for Monhenaut, Poncet, and Verſeau, his protectors, they were obliged to hide themſelves from the violence of the mob, nor dared they again to appear till the veſſel ſailed. And happy was it for them that this fell out at Cairo, for, had they offered to embark him at Alexandria, in all probability it would have coſt all of them their lives.

I must beg leave here to ſuggeſt to the reader, how dangerous, as well as how abſurd, was the plan of this embaſſy. It was to conſiſt of twenty-eight Abyſſinians, twelve of whom were to be ſons of noble families, all to be embarked to France. What a pleaſant day would the embarkation have been to M. de Maillet! What an honourable appearance for his king, in the eyes of other Chriſtian princes, to have ſeen twenty-eight Chriſtians under his immediate protection, twelve of whom we might ſay were princes, (as all the nobility in Abyſſinia are directly of the family of the

king), from motives of vanity only, by the pride of the Jeſuits, and the ignorance of the conſul, hurried in one day into apoſtacy and ſlavery! Whatever Maillet thought of Poncet's conduct, his bringing Murat, and him only, cook as he was, was the very luckieſt accident of his life.

I KNOW French flatterers will ſay this would not have happened, or, if it had, a vengeance would have followed, worthy the occaſion and the reſentment of ſo great a king, and would have prevented all ſuch violations of the law of nations for the future. To this I anſwer, The miſchief would have been irreparable, and the revenge taken, however complete, would not have reſtored them their religion, and, without their religion, they themſelves would not have returned into their own country, but would have remained neceſſary ſacrifices, which the pride and raſhneſs of the Jeſuits had made to the faith of Mahomet.

BESIDES, where is the threatened revenge for the aſſaſſination of M. du Roule, then actual ambaſſador from the king of France, of which I am now to ſpeak? Was not the law of nations violated in the ſtrongeſt manner poſſible by his murder, and without the ſmalleſt provocation? What vengeance was taken for this?—Juſt the ſame as would have been for the other injury; for the Jeſuits and conſul would have concealed the one, as tenderneſs for the Franciſan Friars had made them cover the other, leſt their abominable wickedneſs ſhould be expoſed. If the court of France did not, their conſul in Cairo ſhould have known what the conſequence would be of decoying twenty-eight Abyſſinians from their own country, to be perverted from

their

their own religion, and remain ſlaves and Mahometans at Cairo, a nuiſance to all European nations eſtabliſhed there.

Upon the arrival of the triumvirate at Paris, Monhenaut immediately repaired to the miniſter; Verſeau was introduced to the king, and Poncet, ſoon after, had the ſame honour. He was then led as a kind of ſhow, through all Paris, cloathed in the Abyſſinian dreſs, and decorated with his gold chain. But while he was vainly amuſing himſelf with this ſilly pageantry, the conſul's letters, and the comments made upon them by Monhenaut, went directly to deſtroy the credit of his ever having been in Abyſſinia, and of the reality of Murat's embaſſy.

The Franciſcan friars, authors of the murder of M. du Roule, enemies to the miſſion, as being the work of the Jeſuits; M. Piques, member of the Sorbonne, a body never much diſtinguiſhed for promoting diſcoveries, or encouraging liberal and free inquiry; Abbé Renaudot, M. le Grande, and ſome ancient linguiſts, who, with great difficulty, by the induſtry of M. Ludolf, had attained to a very ſuperficial knowledge of the Abyſſinian tongue, all fell furiouſly upon Poncet's narrative of his journey. One found fault with the account he gave of the religion of the country, becauſe it was not ſo conformable to the rites of the church of Rome, as they had from their own imagination and prejudice, and for their own ends conceived it to be. Others attacked the truth of the travels, from improbabilities found, or ſuppoſed to be found, in the deſcription of the countries through which he had paſſed; while others diſcovered the forgery of his letters, by faults found in the orthography of

that language, not one book of which, at that day, they had ever ſeen.

All theſe empty criticiſms have been kept alive by the merit of the book, by this alone they have any further chance of reaching poſterity; while, by all candid readers, this itinerary, ſhort and incomplete as it is, will not fail to be received as a valuable acquiſition to the geography of theſe unknown countries of which it treats.

I think it but a piece of duty to the memory of a fellow-traveller, to the lovers of truth and the public in general, to ſtate the principal objections upon which this outcry againſt Poncet was raiſed; that, by the anſwers they admit of, the world may judge whether they are or are not founded in candour, and that before they are utterly ſwallowed up in oblivion.

The firſt is, that of the learned Renaudot, who ſays he does not conceive how an Ethiopian could be called by the name of Murat. To this I anſwer, Poncet, de Maillet, and the Turkiſh Baſha, ſay Murat was an Armenian, a hundred times over; but M. Renaudot, upon his own authority, makes him an Ethiopian, and then lays the blame upon others, who are not ſo ignorant as himſelf.

Secondly, Poncet aſſerts Gondar was the capital of Ethiopia; whereas the Jeſuits have made no mention of it, and this is ſuppoſed a ſtrong proof of Poncet's forgery. I anſwer, The Jeſuits were baniſhed in the end of Socinios's reign, and the beginning of that of his ſon Facilidas, that is about the year 1632; they were finally extirpated in the end of this laſt prince's reign, that is before the year 1666, by his

his ordering the laſt Jeſuit Bernard Nogueyra, to be publicly hanged. Now Gondar was not built till the end of the reign of Hannes I. who was grandſon to Socinios, that is about the year 1680. Unleſs, then, theſe holy Jeſuits, who, if we believe the miſſionaries, had all of them a ſight into futurity before their martyrdom, had, from theſe their *laſt viſions*, deſcribed Gondar as capital of Abyſſinia, it does not occur to me how they ſhould be hiſtorians of a fact that had not exiſtence till 50 years after they were dead.

Thirdly, Poncet ſpeaks of towns and villages in Ethiopia; whereas it is known there are no towns, villages, or cities, but Axum.—I believe that if the Abyſſinians, who built the large and magnificent city of Axum, never had other cities, towns, and villages, they were in this the moſt ſingular people upon earth; or, if places where 6000 inhabitants live together in contiguous houſes, ſeparated with broad ſtreets where there are churches and markets, be not towns and villages, I do not know the meaning of the term; but if theſe are towns, Poncet hath ſaid truth; and many more ſuch towns, which he never did ſee nor deſcribe, are in Abyſſinia at this day.

Fourthly, The Abyſſinians live, and always have lived, in tents, not in houſes.—It would have been a very extraordinary idea in people living in tents to have built ſuch a city as Axum, whoſe ruins are as large as thoſe of Alexandria; and it would be ſtill more extraordinary, that people, in ſuch a climate as Abyſſinia, in the whole of which there is ſcorching weather for ſix months, deluges of rain, ſtorms of wind, thunder, lightning, and hurricanes, ſuch as are unknown in Europe, for the other ſix, ſhould chooſe to live in tents, after

knowing how to build ſuch cities as Axum. I wonder a man's underſtanding does not revolt againſt ſuch abſurdities in the moment he is ſtating them.

THE Abyſſinians, while at war, uſe tents and encampments, to ſecure the liberty of movements and changing of ground, and defend themſelves, when ſtationary, from the inclemency of the weather. But no tent has, I believe, yet been invented that could ſtand in the fields in that country from June to September; and they have not yet formed an idea of Abyſſinia who can ſuppoſe this.

I CONCEIVE it is *ignorance* of the language which has led theſe *learned* men into this miſtake. The Abyſſinians call a houſe, ſtanding by itſelf, allotted to any particular purpoſe, Bet. So Bet Negus is a palace, or the houſe of a king; Bet Chriſtian is a church, or a houſe for Chriſtian worſhip; whilſt Bet Mocha is a priſon, or houſe under ground. But houſes in towns or villages are called Taintes, from the Abyſſinian word Tain, to ſleep, lie down, reſt, or repoſe. I ſuppoſe the ſimilitude of this word to tents has drawn theſe *learned* critics to believe, that, inſtead of towns, theſe were only collections of tents. But ſtill I think, no one acquainted with the Abyſſinian language, or without being ſo, would be ſo void of underſtanding as to believe, a people that had built Axum of ſtone, ſhould endure, for ages after, a tropical winter in bare tents.

THE fifth thing that fixes falſehood upon Poncet is, that he deſcribes delicious valleys beyond European ideas; beauciful plains, covered with odoriferous trees and ſhrubs, to be everywhere in his way on the entrance of Abyſſinia; whereas,

whereas, when Salidan's brother conquered this country, the Arabian books ſay they found it deſtitute of all this fruitfulneſs. But, with all ſubmiſſion to the Arabian books, to Abbé Renaudot and his immenſe reading, I will maintain, that neither Salidan, nor his brother, nor any of his tribe, ever conquered the country Poncet deſcribes, nor were in it, or ever ſaw it at a diſtance.

The province where Poncet found theſe beautiful ſcenes lies between lat. 12 and 13°. The ſoil is rich, black mould, which ſix months tropical rain are needed to water ſufficiently, where the ſun is vertical to it twice a-year, and ſtationary, with reſpect to it, for ſeveral days, at the diſtance of 10°, and at a leſſer diſtance ſtill for ſeveral months; where the ſun, though ſo near, is never ſeen, but a thick ſcreen of watery clouds is conſtantly interpoſed, and yet the heat is ſuch, that Fahrenheit's thermometer riſes to 100° in the ſhade. Can any one be ſo ignorant in natural hiſtory, as to doubt that, under theſe circumſtances, a luxuriant, florid, odoriferous vegetation muſt be the conſequence? Is not this the caſe in every continent or iſland within theſe limits all round the globe?

But Poncet contradicts the Arabian books, and all travellers, modern and ancient; for they unanimouſly agree that this country is a dreary miſerable deſert, producing nothing but Dora, which is millet, and ſuch like things of little or no value. I wiſh ſincerely that M. Renaudot, when he was attacking a man's reputation, had been ſo good as to name the author whoſe authority he relied on. I ſhall take upon me to deny there ever was an Arabian book which treated of this country. And with regard to the ancient

cient and modern travellers, his quotations from them are, if poſſible, ſtill more viſionary and ridiculous. The only ancient travellers, who, as I believe, ever viſited that country, were Cambyſes's ambaſſadors; who, probably, paſſed this part of Poncet's track when they went to the Macrobii, and the moſt modern authors (if they can be called modern) that came neareſt to it, were the men ſent by Nero* to diſcover the country, whoſe journey is very doubtful; and they, when they approached the parts deſcribed by Poncet, ſay "the country began to be green and beautiful." Now I wiſh M. Renaudot had named any traveller more modern than theſe meſſengers of Nero, or more ancient than thoſe ambaſſadors of Cambyſes, who have travelled through and deſcribed the country of the Shangalla.

I, THAT have lived months in that province, and am the only traveller that ever did ſo, muſt corroborate every word Poncet has ſaid upon this occaſion. To dwell on landſcapes and pictureſque views, is a matter more proper for a poet than a hiſtorian. Thoſe countries which are deſcribed by Poncet, merit a pen much more able to do them juſtice, than either his or mine.

IT will be remembered when I ſay this, it is of the country of the Shangalla, between lat. 12° and 13° north, that this is the people who inhabit a hot woody ſtripe called Kolla, about 40 or 50 miles broad, that is from north to ſouth, bounded by the mountainous country of Abyſſinia, till they join the Nile at Fazuclo, on the Weſt.

I HAVE

* Plin. vol. 1. lib. 6. cap. 30. p. 376.

I HAVE alſo ſaid, that, for the ſake of commerce, theſe Shangalla have been extirpated in two places, which are like two gaps, or chaſms, in which are built towns and villages, and through which caravans paſs between Sennaar and Abyſſinia. All the reſt of this country is impervious and inacceſſible, unleſs by an armed force. Many armies have periſhed here. It is a tract totally unknown, unleſs from the ſmall detail that I have entered into concerning it in my travels.

AND here I muſt ſet the critic right alſo, as to what he ſays of the produce of theſe parts. There is no grain called Dara, at leaſt that I know of. If he meant millet, he ſhould have called it Dora. It is not a mark of barrenneſs in the ground where this grows: part of the fineſt land in Egypt is ſown with it. The banks of the Nile which produce Dora would alſo produce wheat; but the inhabitants of the deſert like this better; it goes farther, and does not ſubject them to the violent labour of the plough, to which all inhabitants of extreme hot countries are averſe.

THE ſame I ſay of what he remarks with regard to cotton. The fineſt valleys in Syria, watered by the cool refreſhing ſprings that fall from Mount Libanus, are planted with this ſhrub; and, in the ſame grounds alternately, the tree which produces its ſiſter in manufactures, ſilk, whoſe value is greatly inhanced by the addition. Cotton clothes all Ethiopia; cotton is the baſis of its commerce with India, and of the commerce between England, France, and the Levant; and, were it not for ſome ſuch ignorant, ſuperficial reaſoners as Abbè Renaudot, cotton, after wool, ſhould be the favourite manufacture of Britain. It will in time take

place of that ungrateful culture, flax; will employ more hands, and be a more ample field for diſtinguiſhing the ingenuity of our manufacturers.

We ſee, then, how the leaſt conſideration poſſible deſtroys theſe ill-founded objections, upon which theſe very ignorant enemies of Poncet attempted to deſtroy his credit, and rob him of the merit of his journey. At laſt they ventured to throw off the maſk entirely, by producing a letter ſuppoſed to be written from Nubia by an Italian friar, who aſſerts roundly, that he hears Poncet was never at the capital of Ethiopia, nor ever had audience of Yaſous; but ſtole the clothes and money of father Brevedent, then married, and ſoon after forſook his wife and Ethiopia together.

Maillet could have eaſily contradicted this, had he acted honeſtly; for Hagi Ali had brought him the king of Abyſſinia's letter, who thanked him for his having ſent Poncet, and ſignified to him his recovery. But without appealing to M. Maillet upon the ſubject, I conceive nobody will doubt, that Hagi Ali had a commiſſion to bring a phyſician from Cairo to cure his maſter, and that Poncet was propoſed as that phyſician, with conſent of the conſul. Now, after having carried Poncet the length of Bartcho, where it is agreed he was when Brevedent died, (for he was ſuppoſed there to have robbed that father of his money) what could be Hagi Ali's reaſon for not permitting him to proceed half a day's journey farther to the capital, and preſenting him to the king, who had been at the pains and expence of ſending for him from Egypt? What excuſe could Hagi Ali make for not producing him, when he muſt have delivered the conſul's

conſul's letters, telling him that Poncet was come with the caravan for the purpoſe of curing him?

Besides this, M. de Maillet ſaw Hagi Ali afterwards at Cairo, where he reproached him with his cruel behaviour, both to Poncet and to friar Juſtin, another monk that had come along with him from Ethiopia. Maillet then muſt have been fully inſtructed of Poncet's whole life and converſation in Ethiopia, and needed not the Italian's ſuppoſed communication to know whether or not he had been in Ethiopia. Beſides, Maillet makes uſe of him as the forerunner of the other embaſſy he was then preparing to Gondar, and to that ſame king Yaſous, which would have been a very ſtrange ſtep had he doubted of his having been there before.

Supposing all this not enough, ſtill we know he returned by Jidda, and the conſul correſponded with him there. Now, how did he get from Bartcho to the Red Sea without paſſing the capital, and without the king's orders or knowledge? Who franked him at thoſe number of dangerous barriers at Woggora, Lamalmon, the Tacazzé, Kella, and Adowa, where, though I had the authority of the king, I could not ſometimes paſs without calling force to my aſſiſtance? Who freed him from the avarice of the Baharnagaſh, and the much more formidable rapacity of that murderer the Naybe, who, we have ſeen in the hiſtory of this reign, attempted to plunder the king's own factor Muſa, though his maſter was within three days journey at the head of an army that in a few hours could have effaced every veſtige of where Maſuah had ſtood? All this, then, is a ridiculous fabrication of lies; the work, as I have before

ſaid, of thoſe who were concerned in the affair of the unhappy Du Roule.

Poncet, having loſt all credit, retired from Paris in diſgrace, without any further gratification than that which he at firſt received. He carried to Cairo with him, however, a gold watch and a mirror, which he was to deliver to the conſul as a preſent to his companion Murat, whoſe ſubſiſtence was immediately ſtopped, and liberty given him to return to Ethiopia.

Nor did Maillet's folly ſtop here: After giving poor Murat all the ill-uſage a man could poſſibly ſuffer, he entruſted him with a Jeſuit * whom he was to introduce into Ethiopia, where he would certainly have loſt his life had not the bad-treatment he received by the way made him return before he arrived at Maſuah.

This firſt miſcarriage ſeemed only to have confirmed the Jeſuits more in their reſolution of producing an embaſſy. But it now took another form. Politicians and ſtateſmen became the actors in it, without a thought having been beſtowed to diminiſh the enemies of the ſcheme, or render their endeavours uſeleſs, by a ſuperior knowledge of the manners and cuſtoms of the country through which this embaſſy was to paſs.

No adventurer, or vagrant phyſician, (like Poncet) was to be employed in this ſecond embaſſy. A miniſter verſed in

* Father Bernat, a Frenchman.

in languages, negociations, and treaties, accompanied with proper drugomans and officers, was to be ſent to Abyſſinia to cement a perpetual friendſhip and commerce between two nations that had not a national article to exchange with each other, nor way to communicate by ſea or land. The miniſter, who muſt have known this, very wiſely, at giving his fiat, pitched upon the conſul M. de Maillet to be the amabaſſador, as a man who was acquainted with the cauſes of Poncet's failure, and, by following an oppoſite courſe, could bring this embaſſy to a happy concluſion for both nations.

Maillet conſidered himſelf as a general whoſe buſineſs was to direct and not to execute. A tedious and troubleſome journey through dangerous deſerts was out of the ſphere of his cloſet, beyond the limits of which he did not chooſe to go. Beyond the limits of this, all was deſert to him. He excuſed himſelf from the embaſſy, but gave in a memorial to ſerve as a rule for the conduct of his ſucceſſor in the nomination in a country he had never ſeen; but this, being afterwards adopted as a well-conſidered regulation, proved one of the principal cauſes of the miſcarriage and tragedy that followed.

M. Noir du Roule, vice-conſul at Damiata, was pitched upon as the ambaſſador to go to Abyſſinia. He was a young man of ſome merit, had a conſiderable degree of ambition, and a moderate ſkill in the common languages ſpoken in the eaſt, but was abſolutely ignorant of that of the country to which he was going, and, what was worſe, of the cuſtoms and prejudices of the nations through which he was to paſs. Like moſt of his countrymen, he had a violent predilection

for the dreſs, carriage, and manners of France, and a hearty contempt for thoſe of all other nations; this he had not addreſs enough to diſguiſe, and this endangered his life. The whole French nation at Cairo were very ill-diſpoſed towards him, in conſequence of ſome perſonal ſlight, or imprudences, he had been guilty of; as alſo towards any repetition of projects which brought them, their commerce, and even their lives into danger, as the laſt had done.

The merchants, therefore, were averſe to this embaſſy; but the Jeſuits and Maillet were the avowed ſupporters of it, and they had with them the authority of the king. But each aimed to be principal, and had very little confidence or communication with his aſſociate.

As for the capuchins and Franciſcans, they were mortally offended with M. de Maillet for having, by the introduction of the Jeſuits, and the power of the king of France, forcibly wreſted the Ethiopic miſſion from them which the pope had granted, and which the ſacred congregation of cardinals had confirmed. Theſe, by their continual communication with the Cophts, the Chriſtians of Egypt, had ſo far brought them to adopt their deſigns as, one and all, to regard the miſcarriage of du Roule and his embaſſy, as what they were bound to procure from honour and mutual intereſt.

Things being in theſe circumſtances, M. du Roule arrived at Cairo, and took upon him the charge of this embaſſy, and from that moment the intrigues began.

The conſul had perſuaded du Roulé, that the proper preſents he ſhould take with him to Sennaar were prints of the king and queen of France, with crowns upon their heads; mirrors, magnifying and multiplying objects, and deforming them; when brocade, ſattin, and trinkets of gold or ſilver, iron or ſteel, would have been infinitely more acceptable.

Elias, an Armenian, a confidential ſervant of the French nation, was firſt ſent by way of the Red Sea into Abyſſinia, by Maſuah, to proceed to Gondar, and prepare Yaſous for the reception of that ambaſſador, to whom he, Elias, was to be the interpreter. So far it was well concerted; but, in preparing for the end, the middle was neglected. A number of friars were already at Sennaar, and had poiſoned the minds of that people, naturally barbarous, brutal, and jealous. Money, in preſents, had gained the great; while lies, calculated to terrify and enrage the lower claſs of people, had been told ſo openly and avowedly, and gained ſuch root, that the ambaſſador, when he arrived at Sennaar, found it, in the firſt place, neceſſary to make a *procez verbal*, or what we call a precognition, in which the names of the authors, and ſubſtance of theſe reports, were mentioned, and of this he gave advice to M. de Maillet, but the names and theſe papers periſhed with him.

It was on the 9th of July 1704 that M. du Roulé ſet out from Cairo, attended by a number of people who, with tears in their eyes, foreſaw the pit into which he was falling. He embarked on the Nile; and, in his paſſage to Siout, he found at every halting-place ſome new and dangerous

gerous lie propagated, which could have no other end but his deſtruction.

Belac, a Moor, and factor for the king of Sennaar, was chief of the caravan which he then joined. Du Roule had employed, while at Cairo, all the uſual means to gain this man to his intereſt, and had every reaſon to ſuppoſe he had ſucceeded. But, on his meeting him at Siout, he had the mortification to find that he was ſo far changed that it coſt him 250 dollars to prevent his declaring himſelf an abettor of his enemies. And this, perhaps, would not have ſufficed, had it not been for the arrival of Fornetti, drugoman to the French nation at Cairo, at Siout, and with him a capigi and chiaoux from Iſmael Bey, the port of janizaries, and from the baſha of Cairo, expreſsly commanding the governor of Siout, and Belac chief of the caravan, to look to the ſafety of du Roule, and protect him at the hazard of their lives, and as they ſhould anſwer to them.

All the parties concerned were then called together; and the fedtah, or prayer of peace, uſed in long and dangerous journies, was ſolemnly recited and aſſented to by them all; in conſequence of which, every individual became bound to ſtand by his companion even to death, and not ſeparate himſelf from him, nor ſee him wronged, though it was for his own gain or ſafety. This teſt brought all the ſecret to light; for Ali Chelebi, governor of Siout, informed the ambaſſador, that the Chriſtian merchants and Franciſcan friars were in a conſpiracy, and had ſworn to defeat and diſappoint his embaſſy even by the loſs of his life, and that, by preſents, they had gained him to be a partner in that conſpiracy.

Belac,

Belac, moreover, told him, that the patriarch of the Cophts had aſſured the principal people of which that caravan conſiſted, that the Franks then travelling with him were not merchants, but ſorcerers, who were going to Ethiopia, to obſtruct, or cut off the courſe of the Nile, that it might no longer flow into Egypt, and that the general reſolution was to drive the Franks from the caravan at ſome place in the deſert which ſuited their deſigns, which were to reduce them to periſh by hunger or thirſt, or elſe to be otherwiſe ſlain, and no more heard of.

The caravan left Siout the 12th of September. In twelve days they paſſed the leſſer deſert, and came to Khargué, where they were detained ſix days by a young man, governor of that place, who obliged M. du Roule to pay him 120 dollars, before he would ſuffer him to paſs further; and at the ſame time forced him to ſign a certificate, that he had been permitted to paſs without paying any thing. This was the firſt ſample of the uſage he was to expect in the further proſecution of his journey.

On the 3d of October they entered the great deſert of Selima, and on the 18th of ſame month they arrived at Machou, or Moſcho, on the Nile, where their caravan ſtaid a conſiderable time, till the merchants had tranſacted their buſineſs. It was at this place the ambaſſador learned, that ſeveral Franciſcan friars had paſſed the caravan while it remained at Siout, and advanced to Sennaar, where they had ſtaid ſome time, but had lately left that capital upon news of the caravan's approaching, and had retired, nobody knew whether.

A REPORT was ſoon after ſpread abroad at Cairo, but no one could ever learn whence it came, that the ambaſſador, arriving at Dongola, had been aſſaſſinated there. This, indeed, proved falſe, but was, in the mean time, a mournful preſage of the melancholy cataſtrophe that happened ſoon afterwards.

M. DU ROULE arrived at Sennaar towards the end of May, and wrote at that time; but a packet of letters was after brought to the conſul at Cairo, bearing date the 18th of June. The ambaſſador there mentions, that he had been well received by the king of Sennaar, who was a young man, fond of ſtrangers; that particular attention had been ſhewn him by Sid Achmet-el-coom; or, as he ſhould have called him, Achmet Sid-el-coom, i. e. Achmet maſter of the houſehold. This officer, ſent by the king to viſit the baggage of the ambaſſador, could not help teſtifying his ſurpriſe to find it ſo inconſiderable, both in bulk and value.

HE ſaid the king had received letters from Cairo, informing him that he had twenty cheſts of ſilver along with him. Achmet likewiſe told him, that he himſelf had received information, by a letter under the hand and ſeal of the moſt reſpectable people of Cairo, warning him not to let M. du Roule paſs; for the intention of his journey into Abyſſinia was to prevail on Yaſous to attack Maſuah and Suakem, and take them from the Turks. Achmet would not ſuffer the bales intended for the king of Abyſſinia to be opened or viſited, but left them in the hands of the ambaſſador.

M. DU ROULE, however, in writing this account to the conſul, intimated to him that he thought himſelf in dan-

ger, and declares that he did not believe there was on earth ſo barbarous, brutal, and treacherous a people, as were the Nubians.

It happened that the king's troops had gained ſome advantage over the rebellious Arabs, on which account there was a feſtival at court, and M. du Roule thought himſelf obliged to exert himſelf in every thing which could add to the magnificence of the occaſion. With this intention he ſhaved his beard, and dreſt himſelf like a European, and in this manner he received the viſit of the miniſter Achmet. M. Macé, in a letter to the conſul of the above date, complains of this novelty. He ſays it ſhocked every body; and that the * mirrors which multiplied and deformed the objects, made the lower ſorts of the people look upon the ambaſſador and his company as ſorcerers.

Upon great feſtivals, in moſt Mahometan kingdoms, the king's wives have a privilege to go out of their apartments, and viſit any thing new that is to be ſeen. Theſe of the king of Sennaar are very ignorant, brutiſh, fantaſtic, and eaſily offended. Had M. du Roule known the manners of the country, he would have treated theſe black majeſties with ſtrong ſpirits, ſweetmeats, or ſcented waters; and he might then have ſhewed them with impunity any thing that he pleaſed.

But being terrified with the glaſſes, and diſguſted by his inattention, they joined in the common cry, that the ambaſſador was a magician, and contributed all in their power to

* We have ſeen theſe were recommended by M. Maillet, the conſul.

ruin him with the king; which, after all, they did not accompliſh, without the utmoſt repugnance and difficulty. The fartheſt length at firſt they could get this prince to go was, to demand 3000 dollars of the ambaſſador. This was expreſsly refuſed, and private diſguſt followed.

M. DU ROULE being now alarmed for his own ſafety, inſiſted upon liberty to ſet out forthwith for Abyſſinia. Leave was accordingly granted him, and after his baggage was loaded, and every thing prepared, he was countermanded by the king, and ordered to return to his own houſe. A few days after this he again procured leave to depart; which a ſhort time after was again countermanded. At laſt, on the 10th of November, a meſſenger from the king brought him final leave to depart, which, having every thing ready for that purpoſe, he immediately did.

THE ambaſſador walked on foot, with two country Chriſtians on one hand, and Gentil his French ſervant on the other. He refuſed to mount on horſeback, but gave his horſe to a Nubian ſervant to lead. M. Lipi, and M. Macé, the two drugomans, were both on horſeback. The whole company being now arrived in the middle of the large ſquare before the king's houſe, the common place of execution for criminals, four blacks attacked the ambaſſador, and murdered him with four ſtrokes of ſabres. Gentil fell next by the ſame hands, at his maſter's ſide. After him M. Lipi and the two Chriſtians; the two latter proteſting that they did not belong to the ambaſſador's family.

M. DU ROULE died with the greateſt magnanimity, fortitude, and reſignation. Knowing his perſon was ſacred by

the law of nations, he diſdained to defend it by any other means, remitting his revenge to the guardians of that law, and he exhorted all his attendants to do the ſame. But M. Macè the Drugoman, young and brave, and a good horſeman, was not of the ſheep kind, to go quietly to the ſlaughter. With his piſtols he ſhot two of the aſſaſſins that attacked him, one after the other, dead upon the ſpot; and was continuing to defend himſelf with his ſword, when a horſeman, coming behind him, thruſt him through the back with a lance, and threw him dead upon the ground.

Thus ended the ſecond attempt of converting Abyſſinia by an embaſſy. A ſcheme, if we believe M. de Maillet, which had coſt government a conſiderable expence, for in a memorial, of the 1ſt of October 1706, concerning the death of M. du Roule, he makes the money and effects which he had along with him, when murdered, to amount to 200 purſes, or L. 25,000 Sterling. This, however, is not probable; becauſe, in another place he ſpeaks of M. du Roule's having demanded of him a ſmall ſupply of money while at Sennaar, which friar Joſeph, a capuchin, refuſed to carry for him. Such a ſupply would not have been neceſſary if the ambaſſador had with him ſuch a ſum as that already mentioned; therefore I imagine it was exaggerated, with a view to make the Turkiſh baſha of Suakem quarrel with the king of Sennaar about the recovering it.

The friars, who were in numbers at Sennaar, left it immediately before the coming of M. du Roule. This they might have done without any bad intention towards him; they returned, however, immediately after his murder. This, I think, very clearly conſtitutes them the authors of

it.

it. For had they not been privy and promoters of the aſſaſſination, they would have fled with fear and abhorrence from a place where ſix of their brethren had been lately ſo treacherouſly ſlain, and were not yet buried, but their carcaſes abandoned to the fowls of the air, and the beaſts of the field, and where they themſelves, therefore, could have no aſſurance of ſafety.

They however pretended, firſt to lay the blame upon the king of Abyſſinia, then upon the king of Sennaar, and then they divided it between them both. But Elias, arrived at Gondar, vindicated that prince, as we ſhall preſently ſee, and the liſt of names taken at Sennaar; and a long ſeries of correſpondence, which afterwards came out, and a chain of evidence which was made public, inconteſtibly prove that the king of Sennaar was but an agent, and indeed an unwilling one, who two ſeveral times repented of his bloody deſign, and made M. du Roule return to his own houſe, to evade the execution of it.

The blood then of this gallant and unfortunate gentleman undoubtedly lies upon the heads of the reformed Franciſcan friars, and their brethren, the friars of the Holy Land. The intereſt of theſe two bodies, and a bigotted prince, ſuch as Louis XIV then was, was more than ſufficient to ſtop all inquiry, and hinder any vengeance to be taken on thoſe holy aſſaſſins. But he who, unperceived, follows deliberate murther through all its concealments and darkneſs of its ways, in a few years required ſatisfaction for the blood of du Roule, at a time and place unforeſeen, and unexpected.

We

We ſhall now return to Gondar to king Yaſous, who being recovered of his diſeaſe, and having diſmiſſed his phyſician, was preparing to ſet out on a campaign againſt the Galla.

Yasous, for his firſt wife, had married Ozoro Malacotawit, a lady of great family and connections in the province of Gojam. By her he had a ſon, Tecla Haimanout, who was grown to manhood, and had hitherto lived in the moſt dutiful affection and ſubmiſſion to his father, who, on his part, ſeemed to place unlimited confidence in his ſon. He now gave a proof of this, not very common in the annals of Abyſſinia, by leaving Tecla Haimanout behind him, at an age when he was fit to reign, appointing him Betwudet, with abſolute power to govern in his abſence. Yaſous had a miſtreſs whom he tenderly loved, a woman of great quality likewiſe, whoſe name was Ozoro Keduſtè. She was ſiſter to his Fit-Auraris, Agné, a very diſtinguiſhed and capable officer, and by her he had three children, David, Hannes, and Jonathan.

It happened, while he was watching the motions of the Galla, news were brought that Ozoro Keduſtè had been taken ill of a fever; and though, upon this intelligence, he diſpoſed his affairs ſo as to return with all poſſible expedition, yet when he came to Bercanté, the lady's houſe, he found that ſhe was not only dead, but had been for ſome time buried. All his preſence of mind now left him; he fell into the moſt violent tranſport of wild deſpair, and, ordering her tomb to be opened, he went down into it, taking his three ſons along with him, and became ſo frantic at the ſight of the corpſe, that it was with the utmoſt difficulty

culty he could be forced again to leave the ſepulchre. He returned firſt to Gondar, then he retired to an iſland in the lake Tzana, there to mourn his loſt miſtreſs.

But before this, Elias, ignorant of what had paſſed at Sennaar, preſented M. de Maillet's letter to him, beſeeching his leave for M. du Roule to enter Abyſſinia, and come into his preſence. This he eaſily procured: Yaſous was fond of ſtrangers; and not only granted the requeſt, but ſent a man of his own to Sennaar with letters to the king to protect and defray the expences of the ambaſſador to Gondar. This man, who had affairs of his own, loitered away a great deal of time in the journey, ſo that Elias, upon firſt hearing of the arrival of the ambaſſador, ſet out himſelf to meet him at Sennaar. The king, in the mean time, having finiſhed his mourning, diſpatched Badjerund Ouſtas to his ſon the Betwudet, at Gondar, ordering him forthwith to ſend him a body of his houſehold troops to rendezvous on the banks of the lake, oppoſite to the iſland Tchekla Wunze, where he then had his reſidence.

It has been ſaid, contrary to all truth, by thoſe who have wrote travels into this country, that ſons born in marriage had the ſame preference in ſucceſſion as they have in other countries. But this, as I have ſaid, is entirely without foundation: For, in the firſt place, there is no ſuch thing as a regular marriage in Abyſſinia; all conſiſts in mere conſent of parties. But, allowing this to be regular, not only natural children, that is, thoſe born in concubinage where no marriage was in contemplation; and adulterous baſtards, that is, the ſons of unmarried women by married men; and all manner of ſons whatever, ſucceed equally as well to the crown

crown as to private inheritance; and there cannot be a more clear example of this than in the preſent king, who, although he had a ſon, Tecla Haimanout, born of the queen Malacotawit in wedlock, was yet ſucceeded by three baſtard brothers, all ſons of Yaſous, born in adultery, that is, in the life of the queen. David and Hannes were ſons of the king by his favourite Ozoro Keduſtè; Bacuffa, by another lady of quality.

Although the queen, Malacotawit, had paſſed over with ſeeming indifference the preference the king had given his miſtreſs, Ozoro Keduſté, during her lifetime, yet, from a very unaccountable kind of jealouſy, ſhe could not forgive thoſe violent tokens of affection the king had ſhewn after her death, by going down with his ſons and remaining with the body in the grave. Full of reſentment for this, ſhe had perſuaded her ſon, Tecla Haimanout, that Yaſous had determined to deprive him of his ſucceſſion, to ſend him and her, his mother, both to Wechnè, and place his baſtard brother, David, ſon of Ozoro Keduſté, upon the throne.

The queen had been very diligent in attaching to her the principal people about the court. By her own friends, and the aſſiſtance of the diſcontented and baniſhed monks, ſhe had raiſed a great army in Gojam under her brothers, Dermin and Paulus. Tecla Haimanout had ſhewn great ſigns of wiſdom and talents for governing, and very much attached to himſelf ſome of his father's oldeſt and ableſt ſervants.

It was, therefore, agreed, in return to Yasous's message by Oustas, to answer, That, after so long a reign, and so much bloodshed, the king would do well to retire to some convent for the rest of his life, and atone for the many great sins he had committed; and that he should leave the kingdom in the hands of his son Tecla Haimanout, as the ancient king Caleb had resigned his crown into the hands of St Pantaleon in favour of his son Guebra Mascal. As it was not very safe to deliver such a message to a king such as Yasous, it was therefore sent to him by a common foot-soldier, who could not be an object of resentment.

The king received it at Tchekla Wunze, the island in the lake Tzana, where he was then residing. He answered with great sharpness, by the same messenger, "That he had been long informed who these were that had seduced his son, Tecla Haimanout, at once from his duty to him as his father, and his allegiance as his sovereign; that though he did not hold them to be equal in sanctity to St Pantaleon, yet, such as they were, he proposed immediately to meet them at Gondar, and settle there his son's coronation."

This ironical message was perfectly understood. Those of the court that were with Tecla Haimanout, and the inhabitants of the capital, met together, and bound themselves by a solemn oath to live and die with their king Tecla Haimanout. The severity of Yasous was well known; his provocation now was a just one; and the measure of vengeance that awaited them, every one concerned knew to be such that there was no alternative but death or victory.

Neither

NEITHER party were ſlack in preparations. Kaſmati Honorius, governor of Damot, a veteran officer and old ſervant of Yaſous, collected a large body of troops and marched them down the weſt ſide of the lake. Yaſous having there joined them, and putting himſelf at the head of his army, began his march, rounding the lake on its ſouth ſide towards Dingleber.

NEITHER did Tecla Haimanout delay a moment after hearing his father was in motion, but marched with his army from Gondar, attended with all the enſigns of royalty. He encamped at Bartcho, in that very field where Za Denghel was defeated and ſlain by his rebellious ſubjects. Thinking this a poſt ominous to kings, he reſolved to wait for his father there, and give him battle.

THE king, in his march through the low country of Dembea, was attacked by a putrid fever, very common in thoſe parts, which ſo increaſed upon him that he was obliged to be carried back to Tchekla Wunze. This accident diſcouraged his whole party. His army, with Honorius, took the road to Gojam, but did not diſperſe, awaiting the recovery of the king.

BUT the queen, Malacotawit, no ſooner heard that Yaſous her huſband was ſick at Tchekla Wunze, than ſhe ſent to her ſon Tecla Haimanout to leave his unwholeſome ſtation, and march back immediately to Gondar; and, as ſoon as he was returned, ſhe diſpatched her two brothers, Dermin and Paulus, with a body of ſoldiers and two Mahometan muſqueteers, who, entering the iſland Tchekla Wunze by ſurpriſe, ſhot and diſabled the king while ſitting on a couch;

immediately after which, Dermin thruſt him through with a ſword. They attempted afterwards to burn the body, in order to avoid the ill-will the ſight of it muſt occaſion: In this, however, they were prevented by the prieſts of the iſland and the neighbouring nobility, who took poſſeſſion of the body, waſhed it, and performed all the rites of ſepulture, then carried it in a kind of triumph, with every mark of magnificence due to the burial of a king, interring it in the ſmall iſland of Mitraha, where lay the body of all his anceſtors, and where I have ſeen the body of this king ſtill entire.

Nor did the prince his ſon, Tecla Haimanout, now king, diſcourage the people in the reſpect they voluntarily paid to his father. On the contrary, that parricide himſelf ſhewed every outward mark of duty, to the which inwardly his heart had been long a ſtranger.

Poncet, who ſaw this king, gives this character of him: He ſays he was a man very fond of war, but averſe to the ſhedding of blood. However this may appear a contradiction, or ſaid for the ſake of the antitheſis, it really was the true character of this prince, who, fond of war, and in the perpetual career of victory, did, by puſhing his conqueſts as far as they could go, inevitably occaſion the ſpilling of much blood. Yet, when his army was not in the field, though he detected a multitude of conſpiracies among prieſts and other people at home, whoſe lives in conſequence were forfeited to the law, he very rarely, either from his own motives, or the perſuaſion of others, could be induced to inflict capital puniſhments though often ſtrongly provoked to it.

Upon

Upon his death the people unanimouſly gave to him the name of Tallac, which ſignifies *the Great*, a name he has ever ſince enjoyed unimpeached in the Abyſſinian annals, or hiſtory of his country, from the which this his reign is taken.

TECLA HAIMANOUT I.

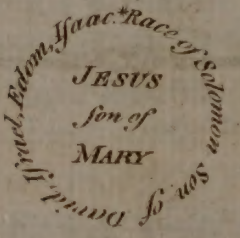
From 1704 to 1706.

Writes in Favour of Du Roule—Defeats the Rebels—Is aſſaſſinated while hunting.

Elias the Armenian, of whom we have already ſpoken, and who was charged with letters of protection from Yaſous to meet M. du Roule at Sennaar, had reached within three days journey of that capital when he heard that king Yaſous was aſſaſſinated. Terrified at the news, he returned in the utmoſt haſte to Gondar, and preſented the letters, which had been written by Yaſous, to be renewed by his ſon, king Tecla Haimanout. Tecla Haimanout read his father's letters, and approved of their contents, ordering them to be copied in his own name; and Elias without delay ſet out with them. I have inſerted a tranſlation of theſe letters, which were originally written in Arabic, and ſeem to me

me to be of the few that are authentic among thoſe many which have been publiſhed as coming from Abyſſinia.

"The king Tecla Haimanout, ſon of the king of the "church of Ethiopia, king of a thouſand churches.



"On the part of the powerful auguſt king, arbiter of "nations, ſhadow of God upon earth, the guide of kings "who profeſs the religion of the Meſſiah, the moſt power- "ful of Chriſtian kings, he that maintains order between "Mahometans and Chriſtians, protector of the boundaries "of Alexandria, obſerver of the commandments of the go- "ſpel, deſcended of the line of the prophets David and Solo- "mon,—may the bleſſing of Iſrael be upon our prophet and "upon them.—To the king Baady, ſon of the king Ounſa, "may his reign be full of happineſs, being a prince endow- "ed with theſe rare qualities that deſerve the higheſt "praiſes as governing his kingdom with diſtinguiſhed wiſ- "dom, and by an order full of equity.—The king of France,

4 "who

* This is not the king's ſeal. It is the invention of ſome Mahometan employed to write the letters.

" who is a Chriſtian, wrote a letter ſeven or eight years ago,
" by which he ſignified to me, that he wiſhed to open a
" trade for the advantage of his ſubjects and of mine, which
" requeſt we have granted. We come at preſent to under-
" ſtand, that he has ſent us preſents by a man whoſe name
" is du Roule, who has likewiſe ſeveral others along with
" him, and that theſe people have been arreſted at your
" town of Sennaar. We require of you, therefore, to ſet
" them immediately at liberty, and to ſuffer them to come
" to us with all the marks of honour, and that you ſhould
" pay regard to the ancient friendſhip which has always
" ſubſiſted between our predeceſſors, ſince the time of the
" *king of Sedgid* and the *king of Kim*, to the preſent day. We
" alſo demand of you to ſuffer all the ſubjects of the king of
" France to paſs, and all thoſe that come with letters of his
" conſul who is at Cairo, as all ſuch Frenchmen come for
" trade only, being of the ſame religion with us. We likewiſe
" recommend to you, that you permit to paſs freely, all
" French Chriſtians, Cophts, and Syrians who follow our
" rites, obſerving our religion, and who intend coming into
" our country; and that you do not ſuffer any of thoſe
" who are contrary to our religion to paſs, ſuch as the monk
" Joſeph, and his companions, whom you may keep at Sen-
" naar, it being in no ſhape our intention to ſuffer them to
" come into our dominions, where they would occaſion
" troubles, as being enemies to our faith. God grant you
" your deſires."—Wrote the 10th of Zulkadè, Anno 1118, *i. e.*
the 21ſt of January 1706.

☞ The direction is—" To king Baady, ſon of king
" Ounſa, may God favour him with his grace."

The

The firſt thing I remark upon this letter is, the mention of the ancient peace and friendſhip which ſubſiſted between the predeceſſors of theſe two princes now correſponding. It was a friendſhip, he ſays, that had endured from the time of the king of *Sedgid*, and the king of *Kim*, to the preſent day.

The kingdom of Sennaar, as we ſhall ſee, was but a modern one, and recently eſtabliſhed by conqueſt over the Arabs. Therefore the kingdoms of *Sedgid* and of *Kim* were, before that conqueſt, places whence this black nation came that had eſtabliſhed their ſovereignty at Sennaar by conqueſt: from which, therefore, I again infer, there never was any war, conqueſt, or tribute between Abyſſinia and that ſtate.

The Arabs, who fed their flocks near the frontiers of the two countries, were often plundered by the kings of Abyſſinia making deſcents into Atbara; but this was never reckoned a violation of peace between the two ſovereigns. On the contrary, as the motive of the Arabs, for coming ſouth into the frontiers of Abyſſinia, was to keep themſelves independent, and out of the reach of Sennaar, when the king of Abyſſinia fell upon them there, he was underſtood to do that monarch ſervice, by driving them down farther within his reach. The Baharnagaſh has been always at war with them; they are tributary to him for eating his graſs and drinking his water, and nothing that he ever does to them gives any trouble or inquietude to Sennaar. It is interpreted as maintaining his ancient dominion over the Shepherds, thoſe of Sennaar being a new power, and accounted as uſurpers.

M. DE MAILLET, nor M. le Grande his hiſtorian, have not thought fit to explain who the monk Joſeph was mentioned in this letter. Now it is certain, that, when Murat and Poncet were returned from Abyſſinia, there was a miſſionary of the minor friars, who arrived in Ethiopia, had an audience of the king, and wrote a letter in his name to the pope, wherein he has foiſted many improbabilities and falſehoods; and concludes with declaring on the part of Yaſous, that he ſubmits to the ſee of Rome in the ſame manner the kings his predeceſſors had ſubmitted. He makes Yaſous ſpeak Latin, too; and it is perfectly plain from the * whole letter, that, though he writes it himſelf, he cannot conceal that the king Yaſous wanted him very much away, and was very uneaſy at his ſtay at Gondar. Who this was we know not, but ſuppoſe it was one of thoſe aſſaſſins of M. du Roule, carrying on a private intrigue without participation of the conſul, ſome of whom were afterwards detected in Walkayt in the reign of David IV.

As for Elias, the forerunner of the French embaſſy, now become the only remains of it, he continued in Abyſſinia (to judge by his letter) in great poverty, till the year 1718, immediately after which he went over to Arabia Felix, and firſt wrote from Mocha to M. de Maillet conſul at Cairo, as it will appear in the reign of David IV. where I have inſerted his letter; that written to M. du Roule in the name of Yaſous, that of Tecla Haimanout to the Baſha and Divan of Cairo, I have now here inſerted, becauſe I have advanced facts founded upon them.

* See the letter itſelf, it is the laſt in Le Grande's book, and in Latin, if I remember rightly.

TRANSLATION *of an* ARABIC LETTER *from the* KING *of* ABYSSINIA *to* M. DU ROULE.

" THE king Tecla Haimanout, king of the eſtabliſhed " church, ſon of the king of a thouſand churches.

" THIS letter cometh forth from the venerable, auguſt " king, who is the ſhadow of God, guide of Chriſtian prin- " ces that are in the world, the moſt powerful of the Naza- " rean kings, obſerver of the commandments of the goſpel, " protector of the confines of Alexandria, he that maintain- " eth order between Mahometans and Chriſtians, deſcended " from the family of the prophets David and Solomon, up- " on whom being the bleſſings of Iſrael, may God make his " happineſs eternal, and his power perpetual, and protect his " arms—So be it.—To his excellence the moſt virtuous and " moſt prudent man du Roule, a Frenchman ſent to us, " may God preſerve him, and make him arrive at a degree " of eminence—So be it.—Elias, your interpreter whom you " ſent before you, being arrived here, has been well receiv- " ed. We have underſtood that you are ſent to us on the " part of the king of France our brother, and are ſurpriſed " that you have been detained at Sennaar. We ſend to you " at preſent a letter for king Baady, in order that he may " ſet you at liberty, and not do you any injury, nor to thoſe " that are with you, but may behave in a manner that is " proper both for you and to us, according to the religion " of Elias that you ſent, who is a Syrian; and all thoſe that " may come after you from the king of France our brother, " or his conſul at Cairo, ſhall be well received, whether they

" be

" be ambaſſadors or private merchants, becauſe we love " thoſe that are of our religion. We receive with pleaſure " thoſe who do not oppoſe our laws, and we ſend away thoſe " that do oppoſe them. For this reaſon we did not receive " immediately Joſeph * with all his companions, not choo- " ſing that ſuch ſort of people ſhould appear in our preſence, " nor intending that they ſhould paſs Sennaar, in order to " avoid troubles which may occaſion the death of many; " but with reſpect to you, have nothing to fear, you may " come in all ſafety, and you ſhall be received with ho- " nour."—Written the 10th of the month Zulkadé, Anno 1118, *i. e.* the 21ſt of January of the year 1706.

☞ THE addreſs is—" Let the preſent be delivered to M. " du Roule at the town of Sennaar."

I SHALL only obſerve upon this letter, that all the prieſts, who had flocked to Sennaar before M. du Roule arrived there, diſappeared upon his near approach to that city, after having prepared the miſchief which directly followed. And, no ſooner was the murder, which they before concerted, committed, than they all flocked back again as if invited to a feſtival. M. de Maillet ſpeaks of ſeveral of them in his letters, where he complains of the murder of du Roule, and ſays that they were then on their way to enter Abyſſinia. Of theſe probably was this Joſeph, whom Tecla Haimanout ſtrictly prohibits to come farther than Sennaar, having ſeen what his father had written concerning him in the firſt letters Elias was charged with.

* Vid. the letter as quoted above.

Others are mentioned in Elias's letter to the conſul as having been in Abyſſinia. He calls them thoſe of the league of Michael and Samuel, of whom we ſhall ſpeak afterwards. But, even though the French conſul had ordered his nation to drive all the ſubjects of Sennaar from their houſes and ſervice, none of theſe miſſionaries were afraid to return and abide at Sennaar, becauſe they knew the murder of the ambaſſador was the work of their own hands, and, without their inſtigation, would never have been committed.

The unlucky meſſenger, Elias, was again about to enter Sennaar, when he received information that du Roule was aſſaſſinated. If he had fled haſtily from this inauſpicious place upon the murder of Yaſous, his haſte was now tenfold, as he conſidered himſelf engaged in the ſame circumſtances that had involved M. du Roule's attendants in his misfortunes.

The king, upon hearing the account given by Elias of the melancholy fate of the ambaſſador at Sennaar, was ſo exaſperated, that he gave immediate orders for recalling ſuch of his troops as he had permitted to go to any conſiderable diſtance; and, in a council held for that purpoſe, he declared, that he conſidered the death of M. du Roule as an affront that immediately affected his crown and dignity. He was, therefore, determined not to paſs it over, but to make the king of Sennaar ſenſible that he, as well as all the other kings upon earth, knew the neceſſity of obſerving the law of nations, and the bad conſequence of perpetual retaliations that muſt follow the violation of it. In the mean time, thinking that the baſha of Cairo was the cauſe of this, he wrote the following letter to him.

Translation

TRANSLATION *of an* ARABIC LETTER *from the* KING *of* ABYSSINIA *to the* BASHA *and* DIVAN *of* CAIRO.

"To the Pacha, and Lords of the Militia of Cairo.

"On the part of the king of Abyſſinia, the king Tecla Haimanout, ſon of the king of the church of Abyſſinia.

"ON the part of the auguſt king, the powerful arbiter of "nations, ſhadow of God upon earth, the guide of kings "who profeſs the religion of the Meſſiah, the moſt power- "ful of all Chriſtian kings, he who maintains order between "Mahometans and Chriſtians, protector of the confines of "Alexandria, obſerver of the commandments of the goſpel, "heir from father to ſon of a moſt powerful kingdom, de- "ſcended of the family of David and Solomon,—may the "bleſſing of Iſrael be upon our prophet, and upon them! "may his happineſs be durable, and his greatneſs laſting, "and may his powerful army be always feared.—To the "moſt powerful lord, elevated by his dignity, venerable by "his merits, diſtinguiſhed by his ſtrength and riches among "all Mahometans, the refuge of all thoſe that reverence "him, who by his prudence governs and directs the armies "of the noble empire, and commands his confines; victori- "ous viceroy of Egypt, the four corners of which ſhall be "always reſpected and defended:—ſo be it.—And to all the "diſtinguiſhed princes, judges, men of learning, and other "officers whoſe buſineſs it is to maintain order and good "government and to all commanders in general, may God "preſerve them all in their dignities, in the nobleneſs of

" their health. You are to know that our anceſtors never " bore any envy to other kings, nor did they ever occaſion " them any trouble, or ſhew them any mark of hatred. On the " contrary, they have, upon all occaſions, given them proofs of " their friendſhips, aſſiſting them generouſly, relieving them " in their neceſſities, as well in what concerns the caravan " and pilgrims of Mecca in Arabia Felix, as in the Indies, in " *Perſia*, and other diſtant and out-of-the-way places, alſo by " protecting diſtinguiſhed perſons in every urgent neccеſſity.

" Nevertheless, the king of France our brother, who " profeſſes our religion and our law, having been induced " thereto, by ſome advances of friendſhip on our part ſuch " as are proper, ſent an ambaſſador to us; I under- " ſtand that you cauſed arreſt him at Sennaar, and alſo ano- " ther by name Murat, the Syrian, whom you did put in " priſon alſo, though he was ſent to that ambaſſador on " our part, and by thus doing, you have violated the law of " nations, as ambaſſadors of kings ought to be at liberty to " go wherever they will; and it is a general obligation to " treat them with honour, and not to moleſt or detain them, " nor ſhould they be ſubject to pay cuſtoms, or any ſort of " preſents. We could very ſoon repay you in kind, if we " were inclined to revenge the inſult you have offered to " the man Murat ſent on our part; the Nile would be ſuffi- " cient to puniſh you, ſince God hath put into our power " his fountain, his outlet, and his increaſe, and that we can " diſpoſe of the ſame to do you harm; for the preſent we " demand of, and exhort you to deſiſt from any future vex- " ations towards our envoys, and not diſturb us by detain- " ing thoſe who ſhall be ſent towards you, but you ſhall " let them paſs and continue their route without delay,

" coming and going wherever they will freely for their
" own advantage, whether they are our ſubjects or French-
" men, and whatever you ſhall do to or for them, we ſhall
" regard as done to or for ourſelves."

☞ THE addreſs is—" To the baſha, princes, and lords
" governing the town of great Cairo, may God favour
" them with his goodneſs."

THERE are ſeveral things very remarkable in this letter. The king of Abyſſinia values himſelf, and his predeceſſors, upon never having moleſted or troubled any of his neighbours who were kings, nor borne any envy towards them. We are not then to believe what we ſee often in hiſtory, that there was frequent war between Sennaar and Abyſſinia, or that Sennaar was tributary to Abyſſinia. That ſtripe of country, inhabited by the Shangalla, would, in this caſe, have been firſt conquered. But it is more probable, that the great difference of climate which immediately takes place between the two kingdoms, the great want of water on the frontiers, barriers placed there by the hand of Nature, have been the means of keeping theſe kingdoms from having any mutual concerns; and ſo, indeed, we may gueſs by the utter ſilence of the books, which never mention any war at Sennaar till the beginning of the reign of Socinios.

I APPREHEND, that protecting diſtinguiſhed perſons upon great occaſions, alludes to the children of the king of Sennaar, who frequently fly after the death of their father to Abyſſinia* for protection, it being the cuſtom of that ſtate to

* Abdelcader, ſon of Ounſa, retired here.

to murder all the brothers of the prince that ſucceeds, inſtead of ſending them to a mountain, as they do in Abyſſinia.

The next thing remarkable is his protection of the pilgrims who go to Mecca, and the merchants that go to India. Several caravans of both ſet out yearly from his kingdom, all Mahometans, ſome of whom go to Mecca for religion, the others to India, by Mocha, to trade. But it is not poſſible to underſtand how he is to protect the trade in Perſia, with which country he certainly has had no ſort of concern theſe 800 years, nor has it been in that time poſſible for him either to moleſt or protect a Perſian. What, therefore, I would ſuppoſe, is, that the king has made uſe of the common phraſe which univerſally obtains here both in writing and converſation, calling Ber el Ajam the Weſt, and Ber el Arab the Eaſt coaſt of the Red Sea.—Ber el Ajam, in the language of the country, is the coaſt where there is water or rain, in oppoſition to the Tehama, or oppoſite ſhore of Arabia, where there is no water. The Greeks and Latins tranſlated this word into their own language, but did not underſtand it; only from the ſound they called it Azamia, from Ajam. Now Ajam, or Ber el Ajam, is the name of Perſia alſo; and the French interpreter ſays, the king of Abyſſinia protects the caravans of Perſia; when he ſhould ſay, the caravans, going through Ber el Ajam, the Azamia of the ancients, to embark at the two ports Suakem and Maſuah, both in the country of that name.

The next thing to remark here is, that the king acknowledges Murat to be his ambaſſador; and it is the arreſting him, which we have ſeen was done at the inſtance of M. de Maillet

Maillet colluſively, that the king ſays was a violation of the law of nations; and it was this inſult, done to Murat his ambaſſador, that he all along complains of, not that offered to du Roule, which he leaves to the king of France; for he ſays expreſsly, if he was to ſtarve, or deſtroy them all, by ſtopping the Nile from coming into Egypt, it would be on account of the inſult offered to Murat, the envoy, or man, ſent on his part to France. It is plain, therefore, that M. de Maillet perſecuted the poor Syrian very wrongfully, and that in no one inſtance, from firſt to laſt, was he ever in the right concerning that embaſſy.

This ſtep, which juſtice dictated, was not without its reward; for Tecla Haimanout, who had aſſembled his army on this account ſooner than he otherwiſe intended, found immediately after, that a rival and rebel prince, Amda Sion, was ſet up againſt him by the friends of his father Yaſous, and that he had been privately collecting troops, intending to take him by ſurpriſe, when he was, however, at the head of his army ready to give him battle.

The firſt thing the king did was to diſpatch a large body of troops to reinforce Dermin, governor of Gojam, and to him he ſent poſitive orders to force Amda Sion to fight wherever he ſhould find him, while he, with the royal army, came forward with all expedition to keep the people in awe, and prevent them from joining his rival.

Amda Sion, on the other hand, loſt no time. From Ibaba, through Maitſha, he marched ſtraight to Gondar. Being arrived at the king's houſe at Dingleber, he ſat down on the throne with the enſigns of royalty about him, and there

appointed ſeveral officers that were moſt needed, in the army, the provinces, and about his perſon. During his ſtay here, news were brought that Dermin had followed him ſtep by ſtep in the very track he had marched, and laid the whole country waſte that had ſhewn him any countenance or favour. Amda Sion's heart ſeemed to fail him upon this; for he left Dingleber, croſſed the ford at Delakus, and endeavoured to paſs Dermin, by keeping on the weſt ſide of the Nile, and on the low road by which he returned to Ibaba.

Dermin, well-informed as to his motions, and perfectly inſtructed in the ſituation of the country, inſtead of paſſing him, turned ſhort upon his front, croſſing the Nile at Fagitta, and forced him to an engagement in the plain country of Maitſha. The battle, though it was obſtinately fought by the rebels, ended in a complete victory in favour of the king. Thoſe among the rebels who moſt diſtinguiſhed themſelves were the baniſhed monks, the greateſt part of whom were ſlain fighting deſperately. Among theſe, were Abba Welleta Chriſtos, Tobias and his brother Abba Nicolaus, who had been ringleaders in the late religious diſputes in the time of Yaſous, and were now chiefs of the rebellion againſt his ſon.

The greateſt part of the loſs fell upon the common men of Gojam, of the clans Elmana and Denſa. No man of note among them was loſt; only Amda Sion, who fell at their head in the beginning of the engagement, fighting with all the bravery that could be expected from a man in his circumſtances. The rebel army was entirely diſperſed.

On

On the king's ſide no man of conſideration was ſlain, but Anaſtè, ſon of Ozoro Sabel Wenghel.

After having reinforced Dermin, the firſt thing the king did was to ſend three of his brothers, David, Hannes, and Jonathan, to be impriſoned on the mountain of Wechnè. He then marched with his army from Gondar; and, being ignorant of what had happened, he diſpatched his maſter of the horſe, by way of Dingleber, to join Kaſmati Dermin, in caſe he had not ſtill been ſtrong enough to fight the rebels. With his main army he took the road to Tedda, intending to proceed to Gojam; but, by the way, was informed that Dermin had defeated and ſlain his rival Amda Sion: and he had ſcarce croſſed the Nile at Dara, when another meſſenger arrived with news that Dermin had alſo come up with Kaſmati Honorius and his army on the banks of the Nile, at Goutto, had entirely defeated and ſlain him, together with his principal officers, and diſperſed the whole army. Upon this the king marched towards Ibaba, and was there joined by Dermin, when great rejoicing and feaſting enſued for ſeveral days.

On this occaſion the king crowned his mother Malacotawit, conferring upon her the dignity and title of Iteghè; the conſequence of which ſtation I have often deſcribed. Having now no longer enemies to fear, he was perſuaded, by ſome of his favourites, firſt to diſmiſs Dermin and his army, then all the troops that had joined him, and go with a few of his attendants, or court, to hunt the buffalo in the neighbouring country, Idi; which council the young prince too raſhly adopted, ſuſpecting no treaſon.

While the hunting-match laſted, a conſpiracy was formed by Gueber Mo, his two brothers, Palambaras, Hannes, and ſeveral others, old officers belonging to the late king Yaſous, who ſaw that he intended, one by one, to weed them out of the way as ſoon as ſafely he could, and that the whole power and favour was at laſt to fall into the hands of the Iteghé, and her brothers Dermin and Paulus. Accordingly one morning, the conſpirators having ſurrounded him while riding, one of them thruſt him through the body with a ſword, and threw him from his mule upon the earth. They then laid his body upon a horſe, and, with all poſſible expedition, carried him to the houſe of Azena Michael, where he arrived yet alive, but died immediately upon being taken from the horſe. Badjerund Ouſtas, and ſome others of his father's old officers, who had attached themſelves to him after his father's death, took the body of the king and buried it in Quebran.

As ſoon as this aſſaſſination was known, the maſter of the horſe, with the few troops that he could gather together, came to the palace, and took a young ſon of Tecla Haimanout, aged only four years, whom he proclaimed king, and the Iteghé, Malacotawit, regent of the kingdom. But Badjerund Ouſtas, and thoſe who had not been concerned in the murder of either king, went ſtraight to the mountain of Wechné, and brought thence Tifilis, that is Theophilus, ſon to Hannes, and brother to the late king Yaſous, whom they crowned at Emfras, and called him, by his inauguration name, Atſerar Segued.

TIFILIS.

From 1706 to 1709.

Diſſembles with his Brother's Aſſaſſins—Execution of the Regicides—Rebellion and Death of Tigi.

THEOPHILUS, a few days after his coronation, having called the whole court and clergy together, declared to them, that his faith upon the diſputable point concerning our Saviour's incarnation was different from that of his brother Yaſous, or that of his nephew Tecla Haimanout, but in every reſpect conformable to that of the monks of Gojam, followers of Abba Euſtathius, and that of the Iteghè, Malacotawit, Dermin, and Paulus. A violent clamour was inſtantly raiſed againſt the king by the prieſts of Debra Libanos, as having forſaken the religious principles of his predeceſſors. But the king was inflexible; and this ingratiated him more with the inhabitants of Gojam. Not many days after, the king arreſted the maſter of the horſe, Johannes Palambaras, the Betwudet Tigi, and ſeveral others, all ſuppoſed to be concerned in the murder of the late king, and confined them in ſeveral places and priſons.

This laſt action of the king entirely relieved the minds of all the friends of Tecla Haimanout from any further fear of being called to account for the murder of Yaſous; and, in conſequence of this, the queen Malocotawit, with her brothers Dermin and Paulus, and all the murderers of the late king Yaſous, came to Gondar that ſame winter to do homage to Theophilus, whom they now thought their greateſt protector.

But the wiſe and ſagacious king had kept his ſecret in his own boſom. All his behaviour hitherto had been only diſſimulation, to induce his brother's murderers to come within his power. And no ſooner did he ſee that he had ſucceeded in this, than the very firſt day, while they were yet at audience, he ordered an officer, in his own preſence, to arreſt firſt the queen, and then her two brothers Dermin and Paulus. He gave the ſame directions concerning the reſt of the conſpirators, who were all ſcattered about Gondar, eating, drinking, and fearing nothing, but rejoicing at the happy days they had promiſed themſelves, and were now to ſee: he ordered the whole of them, amounting to 37 perſons, many of theſe of the firſt rank, to be all executed that ſame forenoon.

He began with the queen, who was taken immediately from his preſence and hanged by the common hangman on the tree before the palace gate; the firſt of her rank, it is believed, that ever died ſo vile a death, either in Abyſſinia or any other country, the hiſtory of which has come down to our hands. Dermin and Paulus were firſt carried to the tree to ſee their ſiſter's execution; after which, one after the other, they were thruſt through with ſwords, the

weapon with which they had wounded the late king Yasous. But the two Mahometans were shot with muskets, it having been in that manner they had ended the late king's life, after Dermin had wounded him with a sword. As they had committed high treason, none of the bodies of these traitors were allowed to be buried; they were hewn in small pieces with knives, and strewed about the streets, to be eat by the hyænas and dogs; a most barbarous and offensive custom, to which they strictly adhere to this very day.

After having thus taken ample vengeance for the murder of his brother Yasous, Theophilus did not stop here. Tecla Haimanout was, it is true, a parricide, but he was likewise a king, and his nephew; nor did it seem just to Theophilus that it should be left in the will of private subjects, after having acknowledged Tecla Haimanout as their sovereign, to choose a time afterwards, in which they were to cut him off for a crime which, however great, had not hindered them from swearing allegiance to him at his accession, and entering into his service at the time when it was recently committed. He, therefore, ordered all the regicides in custody to be put to death; and sent circular letters to the several governors, that they should observe the same rule as to all those directly concerned in the murder of his nephew Tecla Haimanout, who should be found in places under their command.

Tigi, formerly Betwudet, had been imprisoned in Hamazen, a small district near the Red Sea, under the government of Abba Saluce. This man, by birth a Galla, had escaped from Hamazen, and collected a considerable army of the different tribes of his nation, Liban, Kalkend, and Basso; and, having

having found one that pretended to be of the royal blood, he proclaimed him king, and put his army in motion.

Upon the firſt news of this revolt, the king, though attended with few troops, immediately left Gondar, ordering all thoſe whoſe duty it was to join him at Ibaba. Having there collected a little army, he marched immediately for the country of the Baſſo, deſtroying every thing with fire and ſword. Tigi, in the mean time, by forced marches came to Ibaba, where he committed all ſorts of cruelties without diſtinction of age or ſex. The cries of the ſufferers reached the king, who turned immediately back to the relief of Ibaba; and, not diſcouraged by his enemy's great ſuperiority of number, offered battle to them as ſoon as he arrived. Nor did Tigi and his Galla refuſe it; but, on the 28th day of March 1709, a very obſtinate engagement enſued; where, though the king was inferior in forces, yet being himſelf warlike and active, he was ſo well ſeconded by his troops that Baſſo and Liban were almoſt entirely cut off.

In the field of battle there was a church, built by the late king Yaſous after a victory gained there over the Pagans, whence it had the name it then bore, Debra Mawea, or the *Mountain of Victory*. A large body of theſe Galla, ſeeing that all went againſt them in the field, fled to the church for a ſanctuary, truſting to be protected from the fury of the ſoldiers by the holineſs of the place, and they ſo far judged well; for the king's troops, though they ſurrounded the church on every ſide, did not offer to break into it, or moleſt the enemy that had ſheltered themſelves within. Theophilus, informed of this ſcruple of his ſoldiers, immediately rode up to them, crying out, "That the church was

" defiled by the entrance of ſo many Pagans, and no long-
" er fit for Chriſtian worſhip, that they ſhould therefore im-
" mediately put fire to it, and he would build a nobler one
" in its place." The ſoldiers obeyed without further heſi-
tation; and, with cotton wads wrapt about the balls of their guns, they ſet fire to the thatch, with which every church in Abyſſinia is covered. The whole was inſtantly conſumed, and every creature within it periſhed. Many principal offi-
cers and men of the beſt families on the king's ſide, Bille-
tana Gueta, Sana Denghel, and Billetana Gueta Kirubel, Ayto Stephenous, ſon of Ozoro Salla of Nara, all men of great conſideration, were ſlain that day. What came of the rebel prince was never known. Tigi, with his two ſons, fled from the field; but they were met by a peaſant, who took them priſoners firſt; and, after diſcovering who they were, put them all three to death, and brought their heads to the king.

After ſo ſevere a rebuke, the Galla, on both ſides of the Nile, ſeemed diſpoſed to be quiet, and the king thereupon returned to Gondar amidſt the acclamations of his ſoldiers and ſubjects; but ſcarce had he arrived in the capital when he was taken ill of a fever, and died on the 2d of September, and was buried at Tedda, after a reign of three years and three months.

OUSTAS.

From 1709 to 1714.

Uſurps the Crown—Addicted to hunting—Account of the Shangalla—Active and bloody Reign—Entertains Catholic Prieſts privately—Falls ſick and dies; but how, uncertain.

IT has been already obſerved in the courſe of this hiſtory, that the Abyſſinians, from a very ancient tradition, attribute the foundation of their monarchy to Menilek ſon of Solomon, by the queen of Saba, or Azab, rendered in the Vulgate, the Queen of the ſouth. The annals of this country mention but two interruptions to have happened, in the lineal ſucceſſion of the heirs-male of Solomon. The firſt about the year 960, in the reign of Del Naad, by Judith queen of the Falaſha, of which revolution we have already ſpoken ſufficiently. The ſecond interruption happened at the period to which we have now arrived in this hiſtory, and owed its origin, not to any misfortune that befel the royal family as in the maſſacre of Judith, but ſeemed to be brought about by the peculiar circumſtances of the times, from a well-founded attention to ſelf-preſervation.

YASOUS

YASOUS the Great, after a long and glorious reign, had been murdered by his ſon Tecla Haimanout. Two years after, this parricide fell in the ſame manner. The aſſaſſination of two princes, ſo nearly related, and in ſo ſhort a time, had involved, from different motives, the greateſt part of the noble families of the kingdom, either in the crime itſelf, or in the ſuſpicion of aiding and abetting it.

UPON the death of Tecla Haimanout, Tifilis, or Theophilus, brother of Yaſous, had been brought from the mountain, and placed on the throne as ſucceſſor to his nephew; this prince was ſcarcely crowned when he made ſome very ſevere examples of the murderers of his brother, and he ſeemed privately taking informations that would have reached the whole of them, had not death put an end to his inquiries and to his juſtice.

THE family of king Yaſous was very numerous on the mountain. It was the favourite ſtore whence both the ſoldiery and the citizens choſe to bring their princes. There were, at the very inſtant, many of his ſons princes of great hopes and of proper ages. Nothing then was more probable than that the prince, now to ſucceed, would be of that family, and, as ſuch, intereſted in purſuing the ſame meaſures of vengeance on the murderers of his father and of his brother as the late king Theophilus had done; and how far, or to whom this might extend, was neither certain nor ſafe to truſt to.

THE time was now paſt when the nobles vied with each other who ſhould be the firſt to ſteal away privately, or go with open force, to take the new king from the mountain,

and bring him to Gondar, his capital: A backwardneſs was viſible in the behaviour of each of them, becauſe in each one's breaſt the fear was the ſame.

In ſo uncommon a conjuncture and diſpoſition of men's minds, a ſubject had the ambition and boldneſs to offer himſelf for king, and he was accordingly elected. This was Ouſtas *, ſon of Delba Yaſous, by a daughter of the late king of that name; and Abyſſinia now ſaw, for the ſecond time, a ſtranger ſeated on the throne of Solomon. Ouſtas was a man of undiſputed merit, and had filled the greateſt offices in the ſtate. He had been Badjerund, or maſter of the houſehold, to the late king Yaſous. Tecla Haimanout, who ſucceeded, had made him governor of Samen; and though, in the next reign, he had fallen into diſgrace with Theophilus, this ſerved but to aggrandize him more, as he was very ſoon after reſtored to favour, and by this very prince raiſed to the dignity of Ras, the firſt place under the king, and inveſted at once with the government of two provinces, Samen and Tigré. He was, at the death of Theophilus, the greateſt ſubject in Abyſſinia; one ſtep higher ſet him on the throne, and the circumſtances of the time invited him to take it. He had every quality of body and mind requiſite for a king; but the conſtitution of his country had made it unlawful for him to reign. He took, upon his inauguration, the name of Tzai Segued.

Ousтas, though a new king, followed the cuſtoms of the ancient monarchs of Abyſſinia; for that very reaſon was unwilling

* It ſignifies Juſtus.

unwilling to add novelty to novelty, and it has been a conſtant practice with theſe to make a public hunting-match the firſt expedition of their reign. On theſe occaſions the king, attended by all the great officers of ſtate, whoſe merit and capacity are already acknowledged, reviews his young nobility, who all appear to the beſt advantage as to arms, horſes, and equipage, with the greateſt number of ſervants and attendants. The ſcene of this hunting is always in the Kolla, crowded with an immenſe number of the largeſt and fierceſt wild beaſts, elephants, rhinoceros, lions, leopards, panthers, and buffaloes fiercer than them all, wild boars, wild aſſes, and many varieties of the deer kind.

As ſoon as the game is rouſed, and forced out of the wood by the footmen and dogs, they all ſingly, or ſeveral together, according to the ſize of the beaſt, or as ſtrength and ability in managing their horſes admit, attack the animal upon the plain with long pikes or ſpears, or two javelins in their hands. The king, unleſs very young, ſits on horſeback on a riſing ground, ſurrounded by the graver ſort, who point out to him the names of thoſe of the nobility that are happy enough to diſtinguiſh themſelves in his ſight. The merit of others is known by report.

Each young man brings before the king's tent, as a trophy, a part of the beaſt he has ſlain; the head and ſkin of a lion or leopard; the ſcalp or horns of a deer; the private parts of an elephant; the tail of a buffalo, or the horn of a rhinoceros. The great trouble, force, and time neceſſary to take out the teeth of the elephant, ſeldom make them ready to be preſented with the reſt of the ſpoils; fire, too, is neceſſary for looſing them from the jaw. The head of a

boar is brought ſtuck upon a lance; but is not touched, as being unclean.

THE elephant's teeth are the king's perquiſites. Of theſe round ivory rings are turned for bracelets, and a quantity of them always brought by him to be diſtributed among the moſt deſerving in the field, and kept ever after as certificates of gallant behaviour. Nor is this mark attended with honour alone. Any man who ſhall from the king, queen-regent, or governor of a province, receive ſo many of theſe rings as ſhall cover his arm down to his wriſt, appears before the twelve judges on a certain day, and there, laying down his arm with theſe rings upon it, the king's cook breaks every one in its turn with a kind of kitchen-cleaver, whereupon the judges give him a certificate, which proves that he is entitled to a territory, whoſe revenue muſt exceed 20 ounces of gold, and this is never either refuſed or delayed. All the different ſpecies of game, however, are not equally rated. He that ſlays a Galla, or Shangalla, man to man, is entitled to two rings; he that ſlays an elephant to two; a rhinoceros, two; a giraffa, on account of its ſpeed, and to encourage horſemanſhip, two; a buffalo, two; a lion, two; a leopard, one; two boars, whoſe tuſks are grown, one; and one for every four of the deer kind.

GREAT diſputes conſtantly ariſe about the killing of theſe beaſts; to determine which, and prevent feuds and quarrels, a council ſits every evening, in which is an officer called *Dimſhaſha*, or *Red Cap*, from a piece of red ſilk he wears upon his forehead, leaving the top of his head bare, for no perſon is allowed to cover his head entirely except the king, the twelve judges, and dignified prieſts. This of-

ficer regulates the precedence of one nobleman over another, and is poſſeſſed of the hiſtory of all pedigrees, the nobleſt of which are always accounted thoſe neareſt to the king reigning.

Every man pleads his own cauſe before the council, and receives immediate ſentence. It is a ſettled rule, that thoſe who ſtrike the animal firſt, if the lance remain upright, or in the ſame direction in which it enters the beaſt, are underſtood to be the ſlayers of the beaſt, whatever number combat with him afterwards. There is one exception, however, that if the beaſt, after receiving the firſt wound, tho' the lance is in him, ſhould lay hold of a horſe or man, ſo that it is evident he would prevail againſt them; a buffalo, for example, that ſhould toſs a man with his horns, or an elephant that ſhould take a horſe with his trunk, the man who ſhall then ſlay the beaſt, and prevent or revenge the death of the man or horſe attacked, ſhall be accounted the ſlayer of the beaſt, and entitled to the premium.

This was the ancient employment of theſe councils. In my time they kept up this cuſtom in point of form; the council ſat late upon moſt ſerious affairs of the nation; and the death, baniſhment, and degradation of the firſt men in the kingdom were agitated and determined here under the pretence of ſitting to judge the prizes of paſtimes. This hunting is ſeldom prolonged beyond a fortnight.

The king, from ocular inſpection, is preſumed to be able to chooſe among the young nobility thoſe that are ready for taking the neceſſary charges in the army; and it is from his judgment in this that the prieſts foretel whether his

his reign is to be a ſucceſsful one, or to end in misfortune and diſappointment.

Ousтas, having taken a view of his nobility, and attached ſuch to him as were moſt neceſſary for his ſupport, ſet out for this hunting with great preparations. The high country of Abyſſinia is deſtitute of wood; the whole lower part of the mountains is ſown with different ſorts of grain; the upper part perfectly covered with graſs and all ſorts of verdure. There are no plains, or very ſmall ones. Such a country, therefore, is unfit for hunting, as it is incapable of either ſheltering or nouriſhing any number of wild beaſts.

The lower country, however, called Kolla, is full of wood, conſequently thinly inhabited. The mountains, not joined in chains or ridges, run in one upon the other, but, ſtanding each upon its particular baſe, are acceſſible all round, and interſperſed with plains. Great rivers falling from the high country with prodigious violence, during the tropical rains, have in the plains waſhed away the ſoil down to the ſolid rock, and formed large baſons of great capacity, where, though the water becomes ſtagnant in pools when the currents fail above, yet, from their great depth and quantity, they reſiſt being conſumed by evaporation, being alſo thick covered with large ſhady trees whoſe leaves never fall. Theſe large trees, which, in their growth, and vegetation of their branches, exceed any thing that our imagination can figure, are as neceſſary for food, as the pools of water are for ciſterns to contain drink for thoſe monſtrous beaſts, ſuch as the elephant and rhinoceros, who there make their conſtant reſidence, and who would die with hunger

hunger and with thirſt unleſs they were thus copiouſly ſupplied both with food and water.

This country, flat as the deſerts on which it borders, has fat black earth for its ſoil. It is generally about 40 miles broad, though in many places broader and narrower. It reaches from the mountains of the Habab, or Bagla, which run in a ridge, as I have already ſaid, from the ſouth of Abyſſinia * north down into Egypt, parallel to the Red Sea, dividing the rainy ſeaſons, and it ſtretches like a belt from eaſt to weſt to the banks of the Nile, encircling all the mountainous, or high land part of Abyſſinia; which latter country is, at all times, temperate, and often cold, while the other is unwholeſome, hazy, cloſe, and intolerably hot.

Many nations of perfect blacks inhabit this low country, all Pagans, and mortal enemies to the Abyſſinian government. Hunting theſe miſerable wretches is the next expedition undertaken by a new king. The ſeaſon of this is juſt before the rains, while the poor ſavage is yet lodged under the trees preparing his food for the approaching winter, before he retires into his caves in the mountain, where he paſſes that inclement ſeaſon in conſtant confinement, but as conſtant ſecurity; for theſe nations are all Troglodytes, and by the Abyſſinians are called Shangalla.

However Ouſtas ſucceeded in attaching to him thoſe of the nobility that partook of his ſports, his good fortune in

* Vid general map.

the capital was not equal to it. A dangerous conſpiracy was already forming at Gondar by thoſe very people who had perſuaded him to mount the throne, and whom he had left at home, from a perſuaſion that they only were to be truſted with the ſupport of his intereſt and the government in his abſence.

Upon the firſt intelligence, the king, with a choſen body of troops, entered Gondar in the night, and ſurpriſed the conſpirators while actually ſitting in council. Ras Hezekias, his prime miniſter, and Heraclides, maſter of his houſehold, and five others of the principal confederates, loſt their ears and noſes, and were thrown into priſon in ſuch circumſtances that they could not live. Benaia Baſilé, one of the principal traitors, and the moſt obnoxious to the king, eſcaped for a time, having had already intelligence of Ouſtas's coming.

The king having quieted every thing at Gondar, being at peace with all his neighbours, and having no other way to amuſe his troops and keep them employed, ſet out to join the remainder of his young nobility whom he had left in the Kolla to attack the Shangalla.

The Shangalla were formerly a very numerous people, divided into diſtinct tribes, or, as it is called, different nations, living each ſeparately in diſtinct territories, each under the government of the chief of its own name, and each family of that name under the juriſdiction of its own chief, or head.

THESE Shangalla, during the fair half of the year, live under the ſhade of trees, the loweſt branches of which they cut near the ſtem on the upper part, and then bend, or break them down, planting the ends of the branches in the earth. Theſe branches they cover with the ſkins of wild beaſts. After this they cut away all the ſmall or ſuperfluous branches in the inſide, and ſo form a ſpacious pavilion, which at a diſtance appears like a tent, the tree ſerving for the pole in the middle of it, and the large top overſhadowing it ſo as to make a very pictureſque appearance.

EVERY tree then is a houſe, under which live a multitude of black inhabitants until the tropical rains begin. It is then they hunt the elephant, which they kill by many various devices, as they do the rhinoceros and the other large creatures. Thoſe who reſide where water abounds, with the ſame induſtry kill the hippopotami, or river-horſes, which are exceedingly numerous in the pools of the ſtagnant rivers. Where this flat belt, or country, is broadeſt, the trees thickeſt, and the water in the largeſt pools, there the moſt powerful nations live, who have often defeated the royal army of Abyſſinia, and conſtantly laid waſte, and ſometimes nearly conquered, the provinces of Tigré and Siré, the moſt warlike and moſt populous part in Abyſſinia.

THE moſt conſiderable ſettlement of this nation is at Amba Tzaada, between the Mareb and Tacazzè, but nearer by one-third to the Mareb, and almoſt N. W. from Dobarwa. Theſe people, who have a variety of veniſon, kill it in the fair months, and hang it up, cut into thongs as thick as a man's thumb, like ſo many ropes, on the trees around them. The ſun dries and hardens it to a conſiſtence almoſt like

leather, or the hardeſt fiſh ſent from Newfoundland. This is their proviſion for the winter months: They firſt beat it with a wooden mallet, then boil it, after which they roaſt it upon the embers; and it is hard enough after it has undergone all thoſe operations.

The Dobenah, the moſt powerful of all the Shangalla, who have a ſpecies of ſupremacy or command over all the reſt of the nations, live altogether upon the elephant or rhinoceros. In other countries, where there is leſs water, fewer trees, and more graſs, the Shangalla feed chiefly upon more promiſcuous kinds of food, as buffaloes, deer, boars, lions, and ſerpents. Theſe are the nations nearer the Tacazzé, Ras el Feel, and the plains of Sirè in Abyſſinia, the chief of which nations is called Baaſa. And ſtill farther weſt of the Tacazzè, and the valley of Waldubba, is a tribe of theſe, who live chiefly upon the crocodile, hippopotamus, and other fiſh; and, in the ſummer, upon locuſts, which they boil firſt, and afterwards keep dry in baſkets, moſt curiouſly made with ſplit branches of trees, ſo cloſely woven together as to contain water almoſt as well as a wooden veſſel.

This nation borders nearly upon the Abyſſinian hunting-ground; but, not venturing to extend themſelves in the chace of wild beaſts, they are confined to the neighbourhood of the Tacazzé, and rivers falling into it, where they fiſh in ſafety: the banks of that river are deep, interrupted by ſteep precipices inacceſſible to cavalry, and, from the thickneſs of the woods, full of thorny trees of innumerable ſpecies, almoſt as impervious to foot. Theſe ſtreams, poſſeſſed only by themſelves, afford the Baaſa the moſt excellent kinds of fiſh in the moſt prodigious plenty.

In that part of the Shangalla country more to the eaſtward, about N. N. E. of Amba Tzaada, in the northern extremities of the woody part, where the river Mareb, leaving Dobarwa, flows through thick buſhes till it loſes itſelf in the ſands, there is a nation of theſe blacks, who being near the country of the Baharnagaſh, an officer whoſe province produces a number of horſe, dare not, for that reaſon, venture to make an extenſive uſe of the variety of wild beaſts which throng in the woods to the ſouthward, for fear of being intercepted by their enemy, conſtantly upon the watch for them, part of his tribute being paid in black ſlaves. Theſe, therefore, confine themſelves to the ſouthern part of their territory, near the Barabra.

The extraordinary courſe of this river under the ſand, allures to it multitudes of oſtriches, which, too, are the food of the Shangalla, as is a beautiful lizard, never, that I know, yet deſcribed. Theſe are the food of the eaſtern Shangalla; and I muſt here obſerve, that this country and people were much better known to the ancients than to us. The Egyptians traded with them, and caravans of theſe people were conſtantly in Alexandria in the reigns of the firſt Ptolemies. Moſt of the productions of theſe parts, and the people themſelves, are mentioned in the remarkable proceſſion made by Ptolemy Philadelphus on his acceſſion to the throne of Egypt, as already obſerved, though a confuſion often ariſes therein by this country being called by the name of India.

Ptolemy, the geographer, claſſes theſe people exactly enough, and diſtinguiſhes them very accurately by their particular food, or dietetique regimen, though he errs, in-

deed

deed, a little in the particular ſituation he gives to the different nations. His Rhizophagi, Elephantophagi, Acridophagi, Struthiophagi, and Agriophagi, are all the clans I have juſt deſcribed, exiſting under the ſame habits to this day.

THIS ſoil, called by the Abyſſinians *Mazaga*, when wet by the tropical rains, and diſſolving into mire, forces theſe ſavages to ſeek for winter-quarters. Their tents under the trees being no longer tenable, they retire with their reſpective foods, all dried in the ſun, into caves dug into the heart of the mountains, which are not in this country baſaltes, marble, or alabaſter, as is all that ridge which runs down into Egypt along the ſide of the Red Sea, but are of a ſoft, gritty, ſandy ſtone, eaſily excavated and formed into different apartments. Into theſe, made generally in the ſteepeſt part of the mountain, do theſe ſavages retire to ſhun the rains, living upon the fleſh they have already prepared in the fair weather.

I CANNOT give over the account of the Shangalla without delivering them again out of their caves, becauſe this return includes the hiſtory of an operation never heard of perhaps in Europe, and by which conſiderable light is thrown upon ancient hiſtory. No ſooner does the ſun paſs the zenith, going ſouthward, than the rains inſtantly ceaſe; and the thick canopy of clouds, which had obſcured the ſky during their continuance, being removed, the ſun appears in a beautiful ſky of pale blue, dappled with ſmall thin clouds, which ſoon after diſappear, and leave the heavens of a moſt beautiful azure. A very few days of the intenſe heat then dries the ground ſo perfectly, that it gapes

in chaſms; the graſs, ſtruck at the roots by the rays, ſupports itſelf no more, but droops and becomes parched. To clear this away, the Shangalla ſet fire to it, which runs with incredible violence the whole breadth of Africa, paſſing under the trees, and following the dry graſs among the branches with ſuch velocity as not to hurt the trees, but to occaſion every leaf to fall.

A PROPER diſtance is preſerved between each habitation, and round the principal watering-places; and here the Shangalla again fix their tents in the manner before deſcribed. Nothing can be more beautiful than theſe ſhady habitations; but they have this fatal effect, that they are diſcernible from the high grounds, and guide their enemies to the places inhabited.

THE country now cleared, the hunting begins, and, with the hunting, the danger of the Shangalla. All the governors bordering upon the country, from the Baharnagaſh to the Nile on the weſt, are obliged to pay a certain number of ſlaves. Ras el Feel (my government) was alone excepted, for a reaſon which, had I ſtaid much longer in the country, would probably have been found more advantageous to Abyſſinia than all the ſlaves they procure by the barbarous and prodigal effuſion of the blood of theſe unhappy ſavages; for, when a ſettlement of theſe is ſurpriſed, the men are all ſlaughtered; the women, alſo, are many of them ſlain, many throw themſelves down precipices, run mad, hang themſelves, or ſtarve, obſtinately refuſing food.

THE boys and girls under 17 and 18 years of age, (the younger the better) are taken and educated by the king, and

and are ſervants in all the great houſes of Abyſſinia. They are inſtructed early in the Chriſtian religion, and the talleſt, handſomeſt, and beſt inclined, are the only ſervants that attend the royal perſon in his palace. The number of the men was 300 that had horſes in my time. They were once 280, and, before my time, leſs than 200. Theſe are all cloathed in coats of mail, and mounted on black horſes; always commanded by foreigners devoted entirely to the king's will. By ſtrict attention to their morals, removing all bad examples from among them, giving premiums to thoſe that read moſt and beſt, (for they had all time enough upon their hands, eſpecially in winter) and, above all, by the great delight and pleaſure the king uſed to take in converſing with them while alone, countenancing and rewarding them in the line he knew I followed, this body became, as to firmneſs and coolneſs in action, equal perhaps to any of the ſame number in the world; and the greateſt difficulty was keeping them together, for all the great men uſed to wiſh one of them for the charge of his door, which is a very great truſt among the Abyſſinians. The king's eaſineſs was conſtantly prevailed upon to promiſe ſuch, and great inconvenience always followed this, till Ras Michael diſcharged this practice by proclamation, and ſet the example, by returning four that he himſelf had kept for the purpoſe before mentioned.

While what I have ſaid is ſtill in memory, I muſt apply a part of it to explain a paſſage in Hanno's Periplus. We ſaw, ſays that bold navigator, when rowing cloſe along the coaſt of Africa, rivers of fire, which ran down from the higheſt mountains, and poured themſelves into the ſea; this

alarmed him ſo much, that he ordered his gallies to keep a conſiderable offing.

After the fire has conſumed all the dry graſs on the plain, and, from it, done the ſame up to the top of the higheſt mountain, the large ravines, or gullies, made by the torrents falling from the higher ground, being ſhaded by their depth, and their being in poſſeſſion of the laſt water that runs, are the lateſt to take fire, though full of every ſort of herbage. The large bamboos, hollow canes, and ſuch like plants, growing as thick as they can ſtand, retain their greenneſs, and are not dried enough for burning till the fire has cleared the graſs from all the reſt of the country. At laſt, when no other fuel remains, the herdſmen on the top of the mountains ſet fire to theſe, and the fire runs down in the very path in which, ſome months before, the water ran, filling the whole gully with flame, which does not end till it is checked by the ocean below where the torrent of water entered, and where the fuel of courſe ceaſes. This I have often ſeen myſelf, and been often nearly incloſed in it, and can bear witneſs, that, at a diſtance, and by a ſtranger ignorant of the cauſe, it would very hardly be diſtinguiſhed from a river of fire.

The Shangalla go all naked; they have ſeveral wives, and theſe very prolific. They bring forth children with the utmoſt eaſe, and never reſt or confine themſelves after delivery, but waſhing themſelves and the child with cold water, they wrap it up in a ſoft cloth made of the bark of trees, and hang it upon a branch, that the large ants, with which they are infeſted, and the ſerpents, may not devour it. After a few days, when it has gathered ſtrength, the mother carries

it in the ſame cloth upon her back, and gives it ſuck with the breaſt, which ſhe throws over her ſhoulder, this part being of ſuch a length as, in ſome, to reach almoſt to their knees.

THE Shangalla have but one language, and of a very guttural pronunciation. They worſhip various trees, ſerpents, the moon, planets, and ſtars in certain poſitions, which I never could ſo perfectly underſtand as to give any account of them. A ſtar paſſing near the horns of the moon denotes the coming of an enemy. They have prieſts, or rather diviners; but it ſhould ſeem that theſe were looked upon as ſervants of the evil-being, rather than of the good. They prophecy bad events, and think they can afflict their enemies with ſickneſs, even at a diſtance. They generally wear copper bracelets upon their wriſts and arms.

I HAVE ſaid the Shangalla have each ſeveral wives. This, however, is not owing to any inordinate propenſity of the men to this gratification, but to a much nobler cauſe, which ſhould make European writers, who object this to them, aſhamed at the injuſtice they do the ſavage, who all his life, quite the reverſe of what is ſuppoſed, ſhews an example of continence and chaſtity, which the pureſt and moſt refined European, with all the advantages of education, cannot pretend to imitate.

IT is not the men that ſeek to avail themſelves of the liberty they have by their uſages of marrying as often and as many wives as they pleaſe. Hemmed in on every ſide by active and powerful enemies, who conſider them as a ſpecies of wild beaſts, and hunt them preciſely as they do the

the elephant and rhinoceros, placed in a ſmall territory, where they never are removed above 20 miles from theſe powerful invaders furniſhed with horſes and fire-arms, to both of which they are ſtrangers, they live for part of the fair ſeaſon in continual apprehenſion. The other part of the ſeaſon, when the Abyſſinian armies are all collected and abroad with the king, theſe unhappy ſavages are conſtantly employed in a moſt laborious hunting of large animals, ſuch as the rhinoceros, the elephant, and giraffa; and afterwards, in the no leſs laborious preparation of the fleſh of theſe quadrupeds, which is to ſerve them for food during the ſix months rains, when each family retires to its ſeparate cave in the mountain, and has no intercourſe with any of its neighbours, but leaves the country below immerſed in a continual deluge of rain. In none of theſe circumſtances, one ſhould imagine, the ſavage, full of apprehenſion and care, could have much deſire to multiply a race of ſuch wretched beings as he feels himſelf to be. It is the wife, not the man, that is the cauſe of this polygamy; and this is ſurely a ſtrong preſumption againſt what is commonly ſaid of the violence of their inclinations.

Although the Shangalla live in ſeparate tribes, or nations, yet theſe nations are again ſubdivided into families, who are governed by their own head, or chief, and of a number of theſe the nation is compoſed, who concur in all that regards the meaſures of defence and offence againſt their common enemy the Abyſſinian and Arab. Whenever an expedition is undertaken by a nation of Shangalla, either againſt their enemies, the Arabs on the north, or thoſe who are equally their enemies, the Abyſſinians on the ſouth, ſuppoſe the nation or tribe to be the Baaſa, each family attacks

and defends by itſelf, and theirs is the ſpoil or plunder who take it.

The mothers, ſenſible of the diſadvantage of a ſmall family, therefore ſeek to multiply and increaſe it by the only means in their power; and it is by their importunity that the huſband ſuffers himſelf to be overcome. A ſecond wife is courted for him by the firſt, in nearly the ſame manner as among the Galla.

I will not fear to aver, as far as concerns theſe Shangalla, or negroes, of Abyſſinia, (and, I believe, moſt others of the ſame complexion, though of different nations), that the various accounts we have of them are very unfairly ſtated. To deſcribe them juſtly, we ſhould ſee them in their native purity of manners, among their native woods, living on the produce of their own daily labours, without other liquor than that of their own pools and ſprings, the drinking of which is followed by no intoxication or other pleaſure than that of aſſuaging thirſt. After having been torn from their own country and connections, reduced to the condition of brutes, to labour for a being they never before knew; after lying, ſtealing, and all the long liſt of European crimes, have been made, as it were, neceſſary to them, and the deluſion occaſioned by drinking ſpirits is found, however ſhort, to be the only remedy that relieves them from reflecting on their preſent wretched ſituation, to which, for that reaſon, they moſt naturally attach themſelves; then, after we have made them monſters, we deſcribe them as ſuch, forgetful that they are now not as their Maker created them, but ſuch as, by teaching them our vices, we have transformed them into, for ends which, I fear, one day will

not

not be found a ſufficient excuſe for the enormities they have occaſioned.

I would not, by any means, have my readers ſo far miſtake what I have now ſaid as to think it contains either cenſure upon, or diſapprobation of, the ſlave-trade. I would be underſtood to mean juſt the contrary; that the abuſes and neglect of manners, ſo frequent in our plantations, is what the legiſlature ſhould direct their coercion againſt, not againſt the trade in general, which laſt meaſure, executed ſo ſuddenly, cannot but contain a degree of injuſtice towards individuals. It is a ſhame for any government to ſay, that enormous cruelties towards any ſet of men are ſo evident, and have arrived to ſuch exceſs, without once having been under conſideration of the legiſlature to correct them. It is a greater ſhame ſtill for that government to ſay, that theſe crimes and abuſes are now grown to ſuch a height that wholeſome ſeverity cannot eradicate them; and it cannot be any thing but an indication of effeminacy and weakneſs at once to fall to the deſtruction of an object of that importance, without having firſt tried a reformation of thoſe abuſes which alone, in the minds of ſober men, can make the trade exceptionable.

The incontinence of theſe people has been a favourite topic with which blacks have been branded; but, throughout the whole of this hiſtory, I have ſet down only what I have obſerved, without conſulting or troubling myſelf with the ſyſtems or authorities of others, only ſo far, as having theſe relations in my recollection, I have compared them with the fact, and found them erroneous. As late as two

centuries

centuries ago, Chriſtian prieſts were the only hiſtorians of heathen manners.

In the number of theſe Shangalla, or negroes, of which every department of Gondar was full, I never ſaw any proof of unbridled deſires in either ſex, but very much the contrary; and I muſt remark, that every reaſon in phyſics ſtrongly militates againſt the preſumption.

The Shangalla of both ſexes, while ſingle, go entirely naked: the married men, indeed, have a very ſlender covering about their waiſt, and married women the ſame. Young men and young women, till long paſt the age of puberty, are totally uncovered, and in conſtant converſation and habits with each other, in woods and ſolitudes, free from conſtraint, and without any puniſhment annexed to the tranſgreſſion. Yet criminal commerce is much leſs frequent among them than in the ſame number choſen among Chriſtian nations, where the powerful prejudices of education give great advantage to one ſex in ſubduing their paſſions, and where the conſequences of gratification, which always involve ſome kind of puniſhment, keep within bounds the deſires of the other.

No one can doubt, but that the conſtant habit of ſeeing people of all ages naked at all times, in the ordinary tranſactions and neceſſities of life, muſt greatly check unchaſte propenſities. But there are ſtill further reaſons why, in the nature of things an extraordinary vehemence of paſſion ſhould not fall to be a diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic among the Shangalla. Fahrenheit's thermometer riſes there beyond 100°. A violent relaxation from profuſe perſpiration muſt greatly

debilitate the ſavage. In Arabia and Turkey, where the whole buſineſs of man's life is the devoting himſelf to domeſtic pleaſure, men remain conſtantly in a ſedentary life, eat heartily, avoiding every manner of exerciſe, or expence of animal ſpirits by ſweats. Their countries, too, are colder than that of the Shangalla, who, living ſparingly under a burning ſun, and obliged to procure food by laborious hunting, of conſequence deprive themſelves of that quantity of animal ſpirits neceſſary to lead them to any extreme of voluptuouſneſs. And that this is the caſe is ſeen in the conſtitution of the Shangalla women, even though they are without fatigue.

A woman, upon bearing a child or two, at 10 or 11 years old, ſees her breaſt fall immediately down to near her knees *. Her common manner of ſuckling her children is by carrying them upon her back, as our beggars do, and giving the infant the breaſt over her ſhoulders. They rarely are mothers after 22, or begin child-bearing before they are 10; ſo that the time of child-bearing is but 12 years. In Europe, very many examples there are of women bearing children at 14, the civil law fixes puberty at 12, but by an inuendo † ſeems to allow it may be ſomething earlier. Women ſometimes in Europe bear children at 50. The ſcale of years of child-bearing between the ſavage and the European is, therefore, as 12 is to 38. There can be little doubt but their deſires are equal to their ſtrength and conſtitution; but a Shangalla at 22 is more wrinkled and deformed,

* Juvenal, ſat. 13. l. 163. † Niſi malitia ſuppleat ætatem.

deformed, apparently by old age, than is a European woman of 60.

To come ſtill nearer; it is a fact known to naturaliſts, and which the application of the thermometer ſufficiently indicates, that there is a great and ſenſible difference in the degree of animal heat in both ſexes of different nations at the ſame ages or time of life. The voluptuous Turk eſtranges himſelf from the faireſt and fineſt of his Circaſſian and Georgian women in his ſeraglio, and, during the warm months in ſummer, addicts himſelf only to negro ſlaves brought from the very latitudes we are now ſpeaking of; the ſenſible difference of the coolneſs of their ſkins leading him to give them the preference at that ſeaſon. On the other hand, one brown Abyſſinian girl, a companion for the winter months, is ſold at ten times the price of the faireſt Georgian or Circaſſian beauty, for oppoſite reaſons.

The very great regard I ſhall conſtantly pay my fair readers has made me, as they may perceive, enter as tenderly as poſſible into theſe diſcuſſions, which, as a philoſopher and a hiſtorian, I could not, however, wholly omit: the moſt uſeful ſtudy of mankind is man; and not the leaſt intereſting view of him is when, ſtripped of his vain-glory and the pageantry of palaces, he wanders naked and uncorrupted among his native woods and rivers.

I must mention, greatly to the credit of two of the firſt geniuſes of this age, M. de Buffon and Lord Kaimes, that they were both ſo convinced by the arguments above mentioned, ſtated in greater detail and with more freedom, that they immediately ordered their bookſeller to ſtrike out from the

ſubſequent editions of their work all that had been advanced againſt the negroes on this head, which they had before drawn from the herd of prejudiced and ignorant compilers, ſtrangers to the manners and language of the people they were diſhonouring by their deſcriptions, after having before abuſed them by their tyranny.

The Shangalla have no bread: No grain or pulſe will grow in the country. Some of the Arabs, ſettled at Ras el Feel, have attempted to make bread of the ſeed of the Guinea graſs; but it is very taſteleſs and bad, of the colour of cow-dung, and quickly producing worms.

They are all archers from their infancy. Their bows are all made of wild fennel, thicker than the common proportion, and about ſeven feet long, and very elaſtic. The children uſe the ſame bow in their infancy that they do when grown up; and are, by reaſon of its length, for the firſt years, obliged to hold it parallel, inſtead of perpendicular to the horizon. Their arrows are full a yard and a half long, with large heads of very bad iron rudely ſhaped. They are, indeed, the only ſavages I ever knew that take no pains in the make or ornament of this weapon. A branch of a palm, ſtript from the tree and made ſtraight, becomes an arrow; and none of them have wings to them. They have this remarkable cuſtom, which is a religious one, that they fix upon their bows a ring, or thong, of the ſkin of every beaſt ſlain by it, while it is yet raw, from the lizard and ſerpent up to the elephant. This gradually ſtiffens the bow, till, being all covered over, it can be no longer bent even by its maſter. That bow is then hung upon a tree,

and a new one is made in its place, till the ſame circumſtance again happens; and one of theſe bows, that which its maſter liked beſt, is buried with him in the hopes of its riſing again materially with his body, when he ſhall be endowed with a greater degree of ſtrength, without fear of death, or being ſubjected to pain, with a capacity to enjoy in exceſs every human pleaſure. There is nothing, however, ſpiritual in this reſurrection, nor what concerns the ſoul, but it is wholly corporeal and material; although ſome writers have plumed themſelves upon their fancied diſcovery of what they call the ſavages belief of the immortality of the ſoul.

Before I take leave of this ſubject, I muſt again explain, from what I have already ſaid, a difficult paſſage in claſſical hiſtory. Herodotus * ſays, that, in the country we have been juſt now deſcribing, there was a nation called Macrobii, which was certainly not the real name of the Shangalla, but one the Greeks had given them, from a ſuppoſed circumſtance of their being remarkable long livers, as that name imports. Theſe were the weſtern Shangalla, ſituated below Guba and Nuba, the gold country, on both ſides of the Nile north of Fazuclo.

The Guba and the Nuba, and various black nations that inhabits the foot of that large chain of mountains called Dyre and Tegla †, are thoſe in whoſe countries the fineſt gold is found, which is waſhed from the mountains in the time of violent

* Herod. lib. 3. par. 17. & ſeq. † Suppoſed to be the Garamantica Vallis of Ptolemy.

violent rains, and lodged in holes, and roots of trees and graſs, by the torrents, and there picked up by the natives; it is called Tibbar, or, corruptly, gold-duſt. The greateſt part finds its way to Sennaar by the different merchants, Pagan and Mahometan, from Fazuclo and Sudan. The Agows and Gibbertis alſo bring a ſmall quantity of it to Gondar, moſtly debaſed by alloy; but there is no gold in Abyſſinia, nor even in Nubia, weſt of Tchelga, among the Shangalla themſelves.

Cambyses marched from Egypt expreſsly with a view of conquering the gold country, and ſent meſſengers before him to the king, or chief of it, requiring his immediate ſubmiſſion. I omit romantic and fabulous circumſtances; but the anſwer of the king of Macrobii to Cambyſes was, Take this bow, and till you can bring me a man that can bend it, you are not to talk to us of ſubmiſſion. The bow was accordingly carried back with the defiance, but none of the Perſian army could bend it. Yet it was their own weapon with which they practiſed from their infancy; and we are not to think, had it been poſſible to bend this bow, but that ſome of their numerous archers would have done it, for there is no ſuch diſproportion in the ſtrength of men. But it was a bow which had loſt its elaſtic force from the circumſtance above mentioned, and had been long given up as impoſſible to be bent by the Macrobii themſelves, and was now taken down from the tree where it had probably ſome time hung, and grown ſo much the leſs flexible, and intended to be buried, as theſe bows are, in the grave with their maſter, who is to uſe it, after his reſurrection, in another world, where he is to be endowed with ſtrength infi-

nitely more than human: it is probable this bow would have broke, rather than have bent.

If the ſituation of theſe Macrobii in Ptolemy did not put it paſt diſpute that they were Shangalla, we ſhould heſitate much at the characteriſtic of the nation; that they were long livers; none of theſe nations are ſo; I ſcarcely remember an example fairly vouched of a man paſt ſixty. But there is one circumſtance that I think might have fairly led Herodotus into this miſtake; ſome of the Shangalla kill their ſick, weak, and aged people; there are others that honour old age, and protect it. The Macrobii, I ſuppoſe, were of this laſt kind, who certainly, therefore, had many old men, more than the others.

I SHALL now juſt mention one other obſervation tending to illuſtrate a paſſage of ancient hiſtory.

HANNO, in his Periplus, remarks, that, while ſailing along the coaſt of Africa, cloſe by the ſhore, and probably near the low country called Kolla, inhabited by the kind of people we have been juſt deſcribing, he found an univerſal ſilence to prevail the whole day, without any appearance of man or beaſt: on the contrary, at night, he ſaw a number of fires, and heard the ſound of muſic and dancing. This has been laughed at as a fairy tale by people who affect to treat Hanno's fragment as ſpurious; for my own part, I will not enter into the controverſy.

A VERY great genius, (in ſome matters, perhaps, the greateſt that ever wrote, and in every thing that he writes highly reſpectable) M. de Monteſquieu, is perfectly ſatisfied that this

this Periplus * of Hanno is genuine; and it is a great pleasure again to endeavour to obviate any doubt concerning the authenticity of the work in this second passage, as I have before done in another.

In countries, such as those that we have been now describing, and such as Hanno was then sailing by, when he made the remark, there is no twilight. The stars, in their full brightness, are in possession of the whole heavens, when in an instant the sun appears without a harbinger; and they all disappear together. We shall say, at sun-rising the thermometer is from 48° to 60°; at 3 o'clock in the afternoon it is from 100° to 115°; an universal relaxation, a kind of irresistible languor and aversion to all action takes possession of both man and beast; the appetite fails, and sleep and quiet are the only things the mind is capable of desiring, or the body of enduring: cattle, birds, and beasts all flock to the shade, and to the neighbourhood of running streams, or deep stagnant pools, and there, avoiding the effects of the scorching sun, pant in quiet and inaction. From the same motive, the wild beast stirs not from his cave; and for this, too, he has an additional reason, because the cattle he depends upon for his prey do not stroll abroad to feed; they are asleep and in safety, for with them are their dogs and their shepherds.

But no sooner does the sun set; than a cold night instantly succeeds a burning day; the appetite immediately returns; the cattle spread themselves abroad to feed, and pass

* Dodswell's dissertation of Hanno's Periplus—Montesquieu, tom. I. lib. 21. cap. 11.

paſs quickly out of the ſhepherds ſight into the reach of a multitude of beaſts ſeeking for their prey. Fires, the only remedy, are everywhere lighted by the ſhepherds to keep theſe at a reſpectful diſtance; and dancing, ſinging, and muſic at once exhilarate the mind, and contribute, by alarming the beaſts of prey, to keep their flocks in ſafety, and prevent the bad effects of ſevere cold *. This was the cauſe of the obſervation Hanno made in ſailing along the coaſt, and it was true when he made it: juſt the ſame may be obſerved ſtill, and will be, ſo long as the climate and inhabitants are the ſame.

I HAVE been more particular in the hiſtory of this extraordinary nation, becauſe I had, by mere accident, an opportunity of informing myſelf fully and with certainty concerning it; and, as it is very improbable that ſuch an opportunity will occur again to any European, I hope it will not be ungratefully received.

I SHALL only add an anſwer to a very obvious queſtion which may occur. Why is it that, in this country, nothing that would make bread will grow? Is it from the ignorance of the inhabitants in not chooſing the proper ſeaſons, or is it the imperfection of the ſoil? To this I anſwer, Certainly the latter. For the inhabitants of Ras el Feel were uſed to plow and ſow, and did conſtantly eat bread; but the grain was produced ten or fifteen miles off upon the ſides of

* This ſenſation of the ſavage in the heart of Africa ſeems to be unknown to the enemies of the ſlave-trade; they talk much of heat, without knowing the material ſuffering of the negro is from cold.

of the mountains of Abyſſinia, where every certain number of ſoldiers had ſmall farms allowed them for that purpoſe by government; but ſtill they could never bring up a crop in the Mazaga; and the progreſs of the miſcarriage was this: Before the month of May all that black earth was rent into great chaſms, trode into duſt, and ventilated with hot winds, ſo as to be a perfect *caput mortuum*, incapable of any vegetation. Upon the firſt ſprinkling of rain the chaſms are filled up, and the whole country reſembles dry garden-mould newly dug up. As the ſun advances the rains increaſe; there is no time to be loſt now; this is the ſeaſon for ſowing; let us ſuppoſe wheat. In one night's time, while the wheat is ſwelling in the ground, up grows an immenſe quantity of indigenous natural graſs, that, having ſowed itſelf laſt year, has lain ever ſince in a natural matrix, ready to ſtart at the moſt convenient ſeaſon. Before the wheat, or any grain ſoever can appear, this graſs has ſhot up ſo high and ſo thick as abſolutely to choke it. Suppoſe it was poſſible to hoe or weed it, the graſs will again overtop the grain before it is an inch from the ground. Say it could be again hoed or cleared, by this time the rains are ſo continual, the black earth becomes a perfect mire. The rain increaſes, and the grain rots without producing any crop.

The ſame happens to millet, or Indian corn; the rain rots the plant which is thrown down by the wind. It is equally deſtroyed if ſown at the end of the rains; the graſs grows up, wherever the ground is cleared, in a greater proportion, if poſſible, than in the beginning of the year; and the rain ceaſing abruptly, and the ſun beginning to be intenſely hot the very day it paſſes the zenith, the earth is reduced to an

impalpable powder, whilſt the grain and plant die without ever ſhewing a tendency to germinate.

We left the king, Ouſtas, after detecting a conſpiracy, ready to fall upon ſome ſettlement of Shangalla. This he executed with great ſucceſs, and ſurrounded a large part of the nation called Baaſa, encamped under the trees ſuſpecting no danger. He put the grown people to the ſword, and took a prodigious number of children of both ſexes captive. He was intending alſo to puſh his conqueſt farther among theſe ſavages, when he was called to Gondar by the death of his prime miniſter and confident, Ras Faſa Chriſtos.

Besides his attention to hunting and government, the king had a very great taſte for architecture, which, in Abyſſinia, is a very popular one, though ſcarcely any thing is built but churches. In the ſeaſon that did not permit him to be in the field, he beſtowed a great deal of leiſure and money this way; and he was, at this time, buſy erecting a magnificent church to the Nativity, about a mile below Gondar, on the ſmall river Kahha.

But the ſeaſon of hunting returning before he had finiſhed it, he left it to repair to Bet Malo, a place in the Kolla, where he had built a hunting-ſeat, not far diſtant from the Shangalla, called Baaſa. Here he had a moſt ſucceſsful hunting-match of the buffalo, rhinoceros, and elephant, in which he often put himſelf in great danger, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf in dexterity and horſemanſhip greatly above any of his court. He returned upon news, that perſons, whom he had ſecretly employed, had apprehended Betwudet Baſilé, and his ſon Claudius, who had eſcaped

when the laſt conſpirators were ſeized. Both theſe he ſentenced immediately to loſe their eyes.

THESE hunting-matches, ſo punctually obſerved, and ſo eagerly followed by a man already paſt the flower of his youth, had, in their firſt appearance, nothing but ſound policy. The king's title was avowedly a faulty one; and the many conſpiracies that had been formed had ſhewn him the nobility were not all of them diſpoſed to bear his yoke; nothing then was more political than to keep a conſiderable number of them employed in field-exerciſes, to be informed of their inclinations, and to attach them to his perſon by favours. At the head of this little, but very active army, he was ready in a moment to fall upon the diſaffected, before they could collect ſtrength ſufficient for reſiſtance. Time, however, ſhewed this was not entirely the reaſon of theſe continual intervals of abſence for ſo long a time in the Kolla.

NOTWITHSTANDING the misfortune that had befallen the French ambaſſador, M. du Roule, at Sennaar, in the reign of Yaſous I. and Tecla Haimanout his ſon, under Baady el Ahmer, there had ſtill remained below, in Atbara, ſome of thoſe miſſionaries who had courage and addreſs enough to attempt the journey into Abyſſinia, and they ſucceeded in it. Ouſtas had probably been privy to their arrival in Yaſous's time, and had, equally with him, a favourable opinion of the Romiſh religion.

THESE miſſionaries, though Yaſous was now dead, were perfectly well received by Ouſtas; he had given them in charge to Ain Egzie, an old and loyal ſervant of Yaſous,

and governor of Walkayt. He had placed alſo with them an Abyſſinian prieſt, who had been in Jeruſalem, and was well-affected to the Romiſh faith, to be their interpreter, ſtay with them always, and manage their intereſts, while he himſelf, ſtealing frequently from the hunting-matches, heard maſs, and received the communion, returning back to his camp, as he flattered himſelf, unperceived. Theſe meetings with the prieſts were not, however, ſo well concealed but that they came to the knowledge of many people about court, both ſeculars and clergy. But the king's character, for ſeverity and vigilance, made everybody confine their thoughts, whatever they were, within their own breaſts.

The employment of this year was a ſhort journey to Ibaba, a large market-town, where there is a royal reſidence, below Maitſha, on the weſt, or Gojam ſide of the Nile, from which it is about three days diſtance. From this he returned again, and went to Tcherkin, a ſmall village in Kolla, beyond Ras el Feel, in the way to Sennaar, the principal abode of the elephant. But, in the firſt day's hunting, Yared, maſter of his houſehold, and a conſiderable favourite, being torn to pieces by one of theſe quadrupeds, he gave over the ſport, and returned very ſorrowful to bury him at Gondar, leaving three of his ſervants to execute a deſign he had formed againſt the Baaſa in that neighbourhood.

From the conſtant interruptions Ouſtas had met with in all theſe hunting-matches, and his ſucceſs, notwithſtanding, whenever he had himſelf attended, the divining monks had propheſied his reign was to be ſhort, and attended with much bloodſhed; nor were they for once diſtant from the truth; for, in the month of January 1714, while he was overlook-

looking the workmen building the church of Abba Antonius at Gondar, he was taken ſuddenly ill, and, ſuſpecting ſome unwholſomeneſs or *witchcraft* in his palace, he ordered his tent to be pitched without the town till the apartments ſhould be ſmoaked with gunpowder. But this was done ſo careleſsly by his ſervants, that his houſe was burnt to the ground, which was looked upon as a very bad omen, and made a great impreſſion upon the minds of the people.

The 27th of January it was generally underſtood that the king was dangerouſly ill, and that his complaint was every day increaſing. Upon this the principal officers went, according to the uſual cuſtom, to condole with and comfort him. This was at leaſt what they pretended. Their true errand, however, was pretty well known to be an endeavour to aſcertain whether the ſickneſs was of the kind likely to continue, till meaſures could be adopted with a degree of certainty to take the reins of government out of his hand.

The king eaſily divined the reaſon of their coming. Having had a good night, he uſed the ſtrength that he had thereby acquired to rouſe himſelf for a moment, to put on the appearance of health, and ſhew himſelf, as uſual, engaged in his ordinary diſpatch of buſineſs. The ſeeming good countenance of the king made their condolence premature. Some excuſe, however, for ſo formal a viſit, was neceſſary; but every apology was not ſafe. They adopted this, which they thought unexceptionable, that hearing he was ſick, which they happily found he was not, they came to propoſe to him a thing equally proper whether he was ſick or well; that he would, in time, ſettle the ſucceſſion upon his ſon

Fafil, then in the mountain of Wechnè, as a means of quieting the minds of his friends, preventing bloodſhed, and ſecuring the crown to his family.

Ouſtas did the utmoſt to command himſelf upon this occaſion, and to give them an anſwer ſuch as ſuited a man in health who hoped to live many years. But it was now too late to play ſuch a part; and, in ſpite of his utmoſt diſſimulation, evident ſigns of decay appeared upon him, which his viſitors conjectured would ſoon be paſt diſſembling, and they agreed to ſtay with the king till the evening.

But the ſoldiers on guard, who heard the propoſal of ſending for Ouſtas's ſon, and who really believed that theſe men ſpoke from their heart, and were in earneſt, were violently diſcontented and angry at this propoſal. They began to be weary of novelty, and longed for a king of the ancient royal family. As ſoon, therefore, as it was dark they entered Gondar, and called together the ſeveral regiments, or bodies of ſoldiers, which compoſed the king's houſehold. Having came to a reſolution how they were to act, they returned to their quarters where they were upon guard, and meeting the great officers coming out of Ouſtas's tent, where they, too, had probably agreed upon the ſame meaſure, though it was not known, the ſoldiers drew their ſwords, and ſlew them all, being ſeven in number. Among theſe were Betwudet Tamerté, and the Acab Saat; the one the principal lay-officer, the other the chief eccleſiaſtic in the king's houſe.

This maſſacre ſeemed to be the ſignal for a general inſurrection, in the courſe of which, part of the town was

ſet

ſet on fire. But the ſoldiers, at their firſt meeting in the palace *, had ſhut up the coronation-chamber, and the other royal apartments, and poſſeſſed themſelves of the kettle-drum by which all proclamations were made at the gate, driving away, and rudely treating the multitude on every ſide. At laſt they brought out the drum, though it was yet night, and made this proclamation :—" David, ſon of our late king Yaſous, is our king." The tumult and diſorder, nevertheleſs, ſtill continued; during all which, it was very remarkable no one ever thought of offering an injury to Ouſtas.

While theſe things were paſſing at Gondar, a violent alarm had ſeized all the princes upon the mountain of Wechnè. They had been treated with ſeverity during Ouſtas's whole reign. Their revenues had been with-held, or at leaſt not regularly paid, and they had been reduced nearly to periſh for want of the neceſſaries of life. When, therefore, the accounts of Ouſtas's illneſs arrived, and that the princi-

pal

* There ſeems here ſome contradiction which needs explanation. It is ſaid that the palace was burnt before Ouſtas went to his tent. How then could the ſoldiers aſſemble in it afterwards? The palace conſiſts of a number of ſeparate houſes at no great diſtance, but detached from one another with one room in each. That where the coronation is performed is called Anbaſa Bet; another, where the king ſits in feſtivals, is called Zeffan Bet; another is called Werk Sacala, the gold-houſe; another Gimja Bet, or the brocade-houſe, where the wardrobe and the gold ſtuffs uſed for preſents, or received as ſuch, are laid. Now, we ſuppoſe Ouſtas in any one of theſe apartments, ſay Zeffan Bet, which he left to go to his tent, and it was then burnt; ſtill there remained the coronation-houſe where the regalia was kept, which the ſoldiers locked up that it might not be uſed to crown Faſil, Ouſtas's ſon, whom they thought the ſeven great men they had murdered conſpired to place upon the throne after his father.

pal people had propoſed to name Faſil his ſon, then their fellow-priſoner, to ſucceed him, their fears no longer reminded them of the hardſhips of his father's reign, as they expected utter extirpation as the only meaſure by which he could provide for his own ſecurity. Full of theſe fears, they agreed, with one conſent, to let down from the mountain fifty princes of the greateſt hopes, all in the prime of life, and therefore moſt capable of defending their own right, and ſecuring the lives of thoſe that remained upon the mountain, from the cruel treatment they muſt obviouſly expect if they fell into the hand of an uſurper or ſtranger.

The brother of Betwudet Tamerté, who, with the ſix others, had been murdered before Ouſtas's tent, was, at this time, guardian of the mountain of Wechné. His brother's death, however, and the unſettled ſtate of government, had ſo much weakened both his authority and attention, that he either did not chooſe, or was not able, to prevent the eſcape of theſe princes, all flying for their lives, and for the ſake of preſerving the ancient conſtitution of their country. And that this, and no other was their object, appeared the inſtant the danger was removed; for, as ſoon as the news that David was proclaimed at Gondar arrived at the mountain, all the princes returned of their own accord, excepting Bacuffa, younger brother to the king, who fled to the Galla, and lay concealed among them for a time.

On David's arrival at Gondar, all the old misfortunes ſeemed to be forgotten. The joy of having the ancient royal line reſtored, got the better of thoſe fears which firſt occaſioned the interruption. The priſons were thrown open,

and David was crowned the 30th of January 1714, amidſt the acclamations of all ranks of people, and every demonſtration of feſtivity and joy.

David was ſon of Yaſous the Great, and conſequently brother to the parricide Tecla Haimanout, but by another mother. At his coronation he was juſt twenty-one years of age, and took for his inauguration name Adebar Segued.

In all this time, however, Ouſtas was alive. Ouſtas was, indeed, ſick, but ſtill he was king; and yet it is ſurpriſing that David had been now nine days at Gondar, and no injury had been offered to Ouſtas, nor any eſcape attempted for him by his friends.

It was the 6th of February, the day before Lent, when the king ſent the Abuna Marcus, Itchegué Za Michael, with ſome of the great officers of ſtate, to interrogate Ouſtas judicially, for form's ſake, as to his title to the crown. The queſtions propoſed are very ſhort and ſimple—"Who are "you? What brought you here?" To theſe plain interrogatories, Ouſtas, then ſtruggling with death, anſwered, however, as plainly, and without equivocation, "Tell my "king David, that true it is I have made myſelf king, "as much as one can be that is not of the royal family; "for I am but a private man, ſon of a ſubject, Kaſmati "Delba Yaſous: all I beg of the king is to give me a little "time, and let me die with ſickneſs, as I ſhortly ſhall, with-"out putting me to torment or pain."

On the 10th day of February, that is four days after the interrogation, Ouſtas died, but whether of a violent or natural

tural death is not known. The hiſtorian of his reign, a cotemporary writer, ſays, ſome reported that he died of an amputation of his leg by order of the king; others, that he was ſtrangled; but that moſt people were of opinion that he died of ſickneſs; and this I think the moſt probable, for had the king been earneſtly ſet upon his death, he would not have allowed ſo much time to paſs, after his coronation, before his rival was interrogated; nor was there any reaſon to allow him four days after his confeſſion. David's moderation after the death, moreover, ſeems to render this ſtill more credible; for he ordered his body to be buried in the church of the Nativity, which he had himſelf built, with all the honours and public ceremonies due to his rank as a nobleman and ſubject, who had been guilty of no crime, inſtead of ordering his body to be hewn in pieces, and ſcattered along the ground without burial, to be eat by the dogs; the invariable puniſhment, unleſs in this one inſtance, of high-treaſon in this country.

Posterity, regarding his merit more than his title, have, however, kept his name ſtill among the liſt of kings; and tradition, doing him more juſtice ſtill than hiſtory, has ranked him among the beſt that ever reigned in Abyſſinia.

DAVID IV.

From 1714 to 1719.

Convocation of the Clergy—Catholic Prieſts executed—A ſecond Convocation—Clergy inſult the King—His ſevere Puniſhment—King dies of Poiſon.

THE moderation of the king, both before and after the death of Ouſtas, and perhaps ſome other favourable appearances now unknown to us, ſet the monks, the conſtant pryers into futurity, upon prophecying that the reign of this prince was to be equal in length to that of his father Yaſous the Great, and that it was to be peaceable, full of juſtice and moderation, without execution, or effuſion of civil blood.

DAVID, immediately upon his acceſſion, appointed Fit-Auraris Agnè, Ozoro Keduſte's brother *, his Betwudet, and

* Miſtreſs to Yaſous, and mother to David.

Abra Hezekias his maſter of the houſehold; and was proceeding to fill up the inferior poſts of government, when he was interrupted by the clamours of a multitude of monks demanding a convocation of the clergy.

THESE aſſemblies, however often ſolicited, are never called in the reign of vigorous princes, but by the ſpecial order of the ſovereign, who grants or refuſes them purely from his own free-will. They are, however, particularly expected at the acceſſion of a new prince, upon any apprehenſion of hereſy, or any novelty or abuſe in church-government.

THE arrival of a new Abuna from Egypt is alſo a very principal reaſon for the convocation. Theſe aſſemblies are very numerous. Many of the moſt diſcreet members of the church abſent themſelves purpoſely. On the other hand, the monks, who, by vows, have bound themſelves to the moſt painful auſterities and ſufferings; thoſe that devote themſelves to paſs their lives in the deep and unwholeſome valleys of the country; hermits that ſtarve on the points of cold rocks; others that live in deſerts ſurrounded with, and perpetually expoſed to wild beaſts; in a word, the whole tribe of fanatics, falſe prophets, diviners, and dreamers, people who affect to ſee and foreknow what is in future to happen, by living in perfect ignorance of what is paſſing at the preſent; people in conſtant habits of dirt and naſtineſs, naked, or covered with hair; in ſhort, a collection of monſters, ſcarcely to be deſcribed or conceived, compoſe an eccleſiaſtical aſſembly in Abyſſinia, and are the leaders of an ignorant and furious populace, who adore them as ſaints, and are always ready to ſupport them in ſome violation of the

the laws of the country, or of humanity, to which, by their cuſtoms and manner of life, their very firſt appearance ſhews they have been long ſtrangers.

David, however averſe to theſe aſſemblies, could not decently refuſe them, now a new prince was ſet on the throne, a new Abuna was come from Egypt, and a complaint was ready to be brought that the church was in danger. The aſſembly met in the uſual place before the palace. The Itchegué, or head of the monks of Debra Libanos, was ready with a complaint, which he preferred to the king. He ſtated it was notorious, but offered to prove it if denied, that three Romiſh prieſts, with an Abyſſinian for their interpreter, were then eſtabliſhed in Walkayt, and, for ſeveral years, had been there maintained, protected, and conſulted by the late king Ouſtas, who had often aſſiſted at the celebration of maſs as ſolemnized by the church of Rome.

David was a rigid adherent to the church of Alexandria, and educated by his mother in the tenets of the monks of Saint Euſtathius, that is, the moſt declared enemies of every thing approaching to the tenets of the church of Rome. He was conſequently, not by inclination, neither was he by duty, obliged to undertake the defence of meaſures adopted by Ouſtas, of which he was beſides ignorant, having been confined in the mountain of Wechné. He ordered, therefore, the miſſionaries, and their interpreter, whoſe name was Abba Gregorius, to be apprehended.

These unfortunate people were accordingly produced before the moſt prejudiced and partial of all tribunals. Abba Maſmarè and Adug Tesfo were adduced to interrogate and

to interpret to them, as they underſtood the Arabic, having been at Cairo and Jeruſalem. The trial neither was, nor was intended to be long. The firſt queſtion put was a very direct one; Do you, or do you not, receive the council of Chalcedon as a rule of faith? and, Do you believe that Leo the pope lawfully and regularly preſided at it, and conducted it? To this the priſoners plainly anſwered, That they looked upon the council of Chalcedon as the fourth general council, and received it as ſuch, and as a rule of faith: that they did believe pope Leo lawfully and regularly preſided at it, as being head of the Catholic church, ſucceſſor to St Peter, and Chriſt's vicar upon earth. Upon this a general ſhout was heard from the whole aſſembly; and the fatal cry, "Stone them."—"Whoever throws not three ſtones, he is accurſed, and an enemy to Mary," immediately followed.

One prieſt only, diſtinguiſhed for piety and learning among his countrymen, and one of the chief men in the aſſembly, with great vehemence declared, they were tried partially and unfairly, and condemned unjuſtly. But his voice was not heard amidſt the clamours of ſuch a multitude; and the monks were accordingly by the judges condemned to die. Ropes were inſtantly thrown about their necks, and they were dragged to a place behind the church of Abbo, in the way to Tedda, where they were, according to their ſentence, ſtoned to death, ſuffering with a patience and reſignation equal to the firſt martyrs.

The juſtice, however, which we owe to the memory of the deceaſed M. du Roule, muſt always leave a fear in every Chriſtian mind, that, ſpotted as theſe miſſionaries were with the horrid crime of the premeditated, unprovoked murder

of

of that ambaſſador, the indifference they teſtified at the approach, and in the immediate ſuffering of death, had its origin rather in hardneſs of heart than in the quietneſs of their conſciences. Many fanatics have been known to die, glorying in having perpetrated the moſt horrid crimes to which the ſentence of eternal damnation is certainly annexed in the book before them.

I HAVE often, both on purpoſe and by accident, paſſed by this place, where three large, and one ſmall pile of ſtones, cover the bodies of theſe unfortunate ſufferers; and, with many heavy reflections upon my own danger, I have often wondered how theſe three prieſts, of whatever nation they were, paſſed unnoticed among the number of their fraternity, whoſe memory is honoured with long panegyrics by the Romiſh writers of thoſe times, as deſtined one day to appear in the kalendar. Though thoſe that compoſe the long liſt of Tellez died with piety and reſignation, they were ſurely guilty in the way they almoſt all were engaged, contrary to the laws and conſtitution of the country, in actions and deſigns that can be fairly qualified by no other name than that of treaſon, while no ſuch political meddling out of their profeſſion ever was reproached to theſe three, even by their enemies.

TELLEZ ſays not a word of them; Le Grande, a zealous Catholic writer of theſe times, but little; though he publiſhes an Arabic letter to conſul Maillet, which mentions their names, their ſufferings, and other circumſtances attending them. I ſhall, therefore, take the liberty of offering my conjecture, as I think this ſilence, or the ſuppreſſion

of

of a fact, gives me a title to do; but ſhall firſt produce the letter of Elias Enoch, upon which I found my judgment.

TRANSLATION *of an* ARABIC LETTER *wrote to* M. DE MAILLET.

" AFTER having aſſured M. de Maillet, the conſul, of my " reſpects, and of the continuation of my prayers for his " health, as being a gentleman venerable for his merits, " diſtinguiſhed by his knowledge and great penetration, " of a noble birth, always beneficent, and addicted to pious " actions, (may God preſerve his life to that degree of ho- " nour due to ſo reſpectable a perſon), I now write you from " the town of Mocha. I left Abyſſinia in the year 1718, and " came to this town of Mocha in extreme poverty, or ra- " ther abſolutely deſtitute. God has aſſiſted me: I give " praiſe to him for his bounty, and always remain much o- " bliged to you. What follows is all that I can inform you " as touching the news of Abyſſinia. King Yaſous is long " ſince dead: his ſon, Tecla Haimanout, having ſeized upon " the kingdom by force, cauſed his father to be aſſaſſinated. " This king Yaſous, having given me leave to go to Sennaar, " furniſhed me with a letter addreſſed to the king there, in " which he deſired him to put no obſtacles in the way of " du Roule the French ambaſſador's journey, but to ſuffer " him to enter Ethiopia. He alſo gave me another letter " addreſſed to the baſha and officers of Grand Cairo; and " another letter to the ambaſſador himſelf, by which he ſig- " nified to him that he might enter into Ethiopia without " fear. Accordingly I had departed with theſe letters for Sen- " naar; but king Tecla Haimanout, ſon of king Yaſous, ha- " ving taken poſſeſſion of the kingdom while I was yet in

" Abyſſinia,

"Abyſſinia, I returned and delivered to him the letters "which had been given me by his father. It was now "three months ſince Tecla Haimanout had been upon the "throne; he approved of the letters, and cauſed them to "be tranſcribed in his own name; and ordered me to go "and join du Roule the ambaſſador, and accompany him "back again to Gondar. King Yaſous had already ſent an "officer to meet the ambaſſador at Sennaar; and he had "been gone ſix months without my knowledge; but that "officer, having trifled away his time in trading, did not "enter Sennaar till that king had cauſed the ambaſſador "to be murdered, together with thoſe that were with him. "As for me, not knowing what had happened, I was ad-"vancing with the orders of Tecla Haimanout, when, being "now within three days journey of Sennaar, I heard of the "ambaſſador's death, and that of his companions; and "being terrified at this, I returned into Abyſſinia to let "Tecla Haimanout know what the king of Sennaar had "done. Immediately upon hearing of this, Tecla Haima-"nout formed a reſolution to declare war againſt the king "of Sennaar, but was ſoon after ſlain in a mutiny of the "ſoldiers. He reigned two years. Tiſilis, brother of Ya-"ſous, ſucceeded him, and reigned three years and three "months. Ouſtas, nephew of king Yaſous, ſucceeded Ti-"ſilis, and uſurped the kingdom, of which he was actual-"ly prime miniſter, being ſon of a ſiſter of Yaſous. Ouſtas "was dethroned, and died ſoon after. David, ſon of Ya-"ſous, ſucceeded him, and reigned five years and five "months. The *friars*, who arrived in Ethiopia in the reign "of Ouſtas, were ſtoned to death, upon the ſucceſſion of "David to the throne, by thoſe that were of the party of "David. A ſon of *Michael*, whom he had by a ſlave, aged

" only ſix years, was ſtoned with him. It was the *fourth* ſon " he had. I made Yaſous believe that the religion of the " French was the ſame with that of Ethiopia," &c. &c.

From this letter, we ſee a boy of ſix years old, ſon of one of theſe prieſts or friars, was ſtoned to death with them; and his heap of ſtones appears with thoſe of the others. It was, indeed, a common teſt of the people ſuſpected to be prieſts, who ſtole into Abyſſinia, to offer them women, their vows being known, and that they could not marry. I apprehend, to avoid detection, one at leaſt of them had broken his vow of celibacy and chaſtity, and that this child was the conſequence, but not the only one, as Enoch ſays, in his letter, he had three others; and this probably was the reaſon why the Catholics of thoſe times had conſigned their merit to oblivion, rather than record it with their failings.

For although we know that there were friars who had been in Ethiopia ſince the time of Ouſtas, we ſhould not have been informed who they were, had it not been for a ſmall ſheet, publiſhed at Rome in the year 1774, by a capuchin prieſt called Theodoſius Volpi, ſent to me by my learned and worthy friend the honourable Daines Barrington. From this we find, that theſe three were, Liberato de Wies, apoſtolical prefect in Auſtria; Michael Pius of Zerbe, in the province of Padua; and Samuel de Beumo, of the Milaneſe. The account of their death is the ſame as already given, though the publiſher ſuppreſſes the ſtoning of the child, and the exiſtence of the three other, fruits of the ſeraphic miſſion, through the endeavours of father Michael Pius of Zerbe, of the province of Milan. The child, too, ſtoned to death with his father, was ſix years old, and was, as Elias

ſays, fourth ſon of Michael; and it was in 1714 this cataſtrophe happened, ſo that this will bring theſe fathers entrance into Nubia about the time of the murder of M. du Roule: ſo conſiſtent with every crime is fanaticiſm and falſe religion.

The barbarous monks, gratified in the firſt inſtance, would not be contented without extending their vengeance to Abba Gregorius, the Abyſſinian prieſt, the interpreter. But David, who found upon trial that, in going to attend the prieſts in Walkayt, he had only obeyed the expreſs command of Ouſtas, then his ſovereign, abſolutely refuſed to ſuffer him to be either tried or puniſhed, but diſmiſſed him, without further cenſure or queſtion, to his native country.

While David was thus employed at Gondar, news were brought to him that his brother Bacuffa had left the Galla, and was then in a ſmall town in Begemder, called Wetan. It was this prince who, together with fifty others of the royal family, were let down from the mountain of Wechné, upon Ouſtas's ſon being propoſed, and he alone refuſed to return upon his brother's acceſſion to the throne. David ſent Azaleffi, Guebra Mehedin, and Badjerund Welled de l'Oul, to Wetan, where they apprehended Bacuffa by ſurpriſe, and lodged him in the mountain of Wechné, after having cut off a very ſmall part of the tip of his noſe, which was ſcarcely diſcernible when he came to the throne.

Kaſmati Georgis, had been baniſhed to the mountain in the reign of the late king, where he had contracted an intimate friendſhip with David. He had alſo married a ſiſter of Ozoro Mamet, by whom Yaſous had ſeveral children, par-

ticularly one Welleta Georgis, a prince then of years to govern, and confined to the mountain. David, on his coming to the throne, did not forget his old friendſhip on the mountain; and, paſſing by Emfras, he ſent to Wechné to bring down Kaſmati Georgis to Arringo, one of the king's palaces in Begemder, where he intended to paſs the ſummer. On his return he gave him the government of Gojam; and his favourite Agné, his uncle, dying at this time, very much regretted, Georgis was alſo created Betwudet in his place.

This year Abuna Marcus died; and his ſucceſſor, Abuna Chriſtodulus, arriving the third day of November, this made the calling of another aſſembly of the clergy abſolutely neceſſary, although, from the humour the laſt was in, the whole time of their meeting, the king was very little inclined to it.

The monks in Abyſſinia, as I have often ſaid, are divided into two bodies, thoſe of Debra Libanos and thoſe of Abba Euſtathius. Some have imagined that the difference between theſe two bodies ariſes from a diſpute about two natures in Chriſt. But this is from miſinformation; for, were a diſpute to ariſe about the two natures in Chriſt, each party would declare the other a heretic; but at preſent a few equivocal words, uſed to define the mode and moment of our Saviour's incarnation, though neither opinion is thought heretical *, have the effect to make theſe two ſects enemies all their lives.

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* But there can be no doubt both opinions are abſolute hereſy, in the moſt liberal ſenſe of that word, as expreſsly denying our Saviour's conſubſtantiality

The Abuna is the head of the Abyſſinian church; yet, as he is known to be a ſlave of the Mahometans, upon his firſt arrival, and permiſſion obtained from the king, the aſſembly meets in a large outer court, or ſquare, before the palace, where he is interrogated, and where he declares which of the two opinions he adopts. If he has been properly adviſed, he declares for the ruling and ſtrongeſt party; though ſometimes he is determined, by the addreſs of thoſe about him, to ſide with the weakeſt; and very often, if he has had no inſtruction on his arrival, he does not know what this reference means; for no trace of ſuch diſpute exiſts among his brethren in Cairo, from whence he came. He is, moreover, a ſtranger to the language, and the words containing either opinion, which, for ſhortneſs ſake, are made to mean a great deal more than they at firſt ſeem to import; and, whether freely or literally tranſlated, are equally unintelligible to a foreigner. After the Abuna has declared his choice, this is announced by beat of drum to the people, and is called *Nagar Haimanout*, or, the Proclamation of the Faith. The only ordinary effect this declaration has, is to make the perſon who is at the head of one party an adverſary to him who is the head of the other, all his life after.

The king at his acceſſion makes his declaration alſo. The clergy maintain, that he ſhould do this in an aſſembly called for that purpoſe, though the king denies that there is any neceſſity for the clergy to be preſent; but he conſiders it as his privilege to chooſe his own time and place, and announces it to the people, by proclamation, at what time, and in what manner, he thinks moſt convenient.

Although David had given his permiſſion to aſſemble the clergy to hear the Abuna's declaration, he did not think himſelf bound to aſſiſt at it, and, therefore, he ſent to the monks of Debra Libanos, and thoſe of Abba Euſtathius, to go to the Abuna with Betwudet Georgis, who ſhould interrogate the Abuna, and report the anſwer to the king, who thereupon would order it to be proclaimed to the people. The monks of Debra Libanos refuſed this, as they did not conſider Georgis as indifferent, being known to be a ſtaunch Euſtathian. They declared, therefore, they would neither hear nor regard what the Abuna ſaid, unleſs it was in the king's preſence; and this was juſt what David was reſolved not to humour them in.

Betwudet Georgis, the great officers of ſtate, and moſt of the people of conſideration about Gondar, waited upon the Abuna as the king had commanded; and the Betwudet having deſired him to make his profeſſion, he would only give this evaſive anſwer, That his faith was in all reſpects the ſame as that of Abba Marcos and Abba Sanuda, the ancient and orthodox Abunas.

This anſwer left every party at liberty to imagine that the Abuna was their own. But this evaſion did not content the king, who therefore ordered the Betwudet, without taking further notice of the Abuna, to make proclamation in terms of the profeſſion of the monks of Abba Euſtathius. This occaſioned great heats among the monks of Debra Libanos. They ran all with one accord to the Itcheguè's houſe, for he is their general, or chief of their convent, and here they came to the moſt violent reſolutions, declaring that they would die either together, or man by man,

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in ſupport of their privileges and the freedom of their aſſemblies. From the Itchegué's houſe they ran to the Abuna's, without ſoliciting or receiving any permiſſion from the king; and, upon interrogation, they ſucceeded with the Abuna to the height of their wiſhes; for he anſwered in the preciſe words of their profeſſion—"One God, of the Father alone, united to a body perfectly human, conſubſtantial with ours, and by that union becoming the Meſſiah;" in direct oppoſition to what was proclaimed by the king's order at the gate of the palace the day before—Perfect God and perfect man, by the union one Chriſt, whoſe body is compoſed of a precious ſubſtance, called *Bahery*, not conſubſtantial with ours, or derived from his mother.

Had they ſtopt here it had been well; but the victory was too great, too unexpected, and complete, to admit of their ſitting quietly down without a triumph. They returned, therefore, from the Abuna's, frantic with joy, ſhouting, and ſinging, and more peculiarly one kind of ſong, or hallelujah, uſed always upon victories obtained over infidels. As they paſſed the door of the king's palace, ſome of the officers of the houſehold, Azage Zakery, Azage Tecla Haimanout, and Badjerund Welleta David, moderate men, lovers of peace, and inclined to no party, endeavoured to perſuade them to content themſelves with what they had done, to diſperſe, and each go to his home, before ſome miſchief overtook them. But they were too high-minded. They redoubled their ſongs; and, in this manner, again aſſembled in the Itchegué's houſe to deliberate on what further they were to attempt; when one of the monks, a prophet, or dreamer, declared, "That God had opened his eyes, and that he then ſaw a cherub with a flaming ſword guarding

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the Itchegué's gate:" with ſuch a centinel they concluded that they were perfectly ſafe from any attempts of man.

In the mean time, however, the king was violently affected at the ſeditious behaviour of the monks; nor did he heſitate a moment in what manner he was to puniſh it. As they had employed the ſong which was ſung only for victories obtained over infidels, by which they meant to allude particularly to the king, he detached a body of Pagan Galla to puniſh them; having ſurrounded the Itchegué's houſe, where the monks were aſſembled, they forced open the gate, (and the cherub with the flaming ſword not interfering) they fell, ſword in hand, upon the unarmed prieſts, and in an inſtant laid above a hundred of the principal of them dead upon the floor. They then ſallied out with their bloody weapons into the ſtreet, and hewed to pieces thoſe that attended the proceſſion, and who were ſtill diverting themſelves with their ſong. Gondar now appeared like a town taken by ſtorm; every ſtreet was covered with the dead, and dying; and this maſſacre continued till next day at noon, when, by proclamation, the king ordered it to ceaſe.

David, now ſatisfied as to the prieſts, thought he owed to the Abuna a mortification for his double-dealing. He ſent, therefore, the ſoldiers to take him out of his houſe, and bring him to the gate of the palace, where the poor wretch, half dead with fear, expected every moment to fall by the bloody hands of the Djawi. Having enjoyed his panic ſome time, the king ordered him to be placed cloſe beſide the kettle-drum, and a profeſſion of faith was made in the royal preſence, and announced by beat of drum to the people, agreeing in every reſpect to that publiſhed the firſt day by

Betwudet Georgis, and directly contradicting what he had ſaid with his own mouth to the monks of Debra Libanos, which was the occaſion of the riot.

This bloody, indiſcriminate maſſacre had comprehended too many men of worth and diſtinction not to occaſion great diſcontent among the principal people both within and without the palace. Conſpiracies againſt the king were now everywhere openly talked of, the fruits of which ſoon appeared. David fell ſick, and thoſe about him endeavoured to perſuade him that it was the remains of an injury which he had lately received from a fall off his horſe. But, upon the meeting of a council on the 9th of March 1719, it was diſcovered and proved, that Kaſmati Laté and Ras Georgis had employed Kutcho, keeper of the palace, to give a ſtrong poiſon to the king, which he had taken that morning from the hands of a Mahometan. Ras Georgis was then brought before the council, and ſcarcely denied the fact; upon which his only ſon was ordered to be hewn to pieces before his face, and immediately after the father's eyes were pulled out. Kutcho, keeper of the palace, and the Mahometan who gave the poiſon, were hewn to pieces with ſwords before the gate of the palace, and their mangled bodies thrown to the dogs. The king died that evening in great agony.

The king's favourite, Betwudet Georgis, found himſelf now in a moſt dangerous ſituation. David his protector was dead, and he was left now alone to anſwer for thoſe bloody meaſures of which he was univerſally believed to be the adviſer. It was abſolutely neceſſary, therefore, if poſſible, to ſecure a ſucceſſor of David's own family, who might

might ſtop the proſecutions againſt him for ſteps the king had adopted as his own, and as ſuch had carried into execution.

We have already obſerved, that, when baniſhed to the mountain of Wechné by Ouſtas, he had contracted there, firſt a friendſhip with David, and, at the ſame time, with another prince, Ayto Welled Georgis, who was ſon to Yaſous by Ozoro Mamet, whoſe ſiſter Georgis had married, and conſequently was uncle to Ayto Welleta Georgis, as having married his aunt, ſiſter to Ozoro Mamet. When this prince now arrived at manhood, he knew himſelf perfectly ſecure; and, therefore, a number of the men in power being then aſſembled at his houſe, he loſt no time, but ſurrounded it with a body of ſoldiers. He propoſed to them Welled Georgis as immediate ſucceſſor to David. The people preſent, ſeeing themſelves in the ſoldiers hands, and convinced from the recent examples, that Georgis was not very tender in the uſe of them, in appearance chearfully, and without heſitation, approved of the Betwudet's choice; and Lika Jonathan, one of the chief civil judges, performed the office of crier, proclaiming with an audible voice, "Ayto Welled Georgis, brother to our late king David, ſon of our great king Yaſous, he is now our king. Mourn for the king that is dead, but rejoice with the king that is alive." This is the ordinary ſtile of the proclamation. Mutual congratulations and promiſes paſſed among the members of the meeting, but with very different reſolutions.

All the company, eſcorted by a body of archers, and another of fuzileers, with Betwudet Georgis at their head, repaired to the great place before the palace to make the

ſame proclamation by beat of drum that they had done in the Betwudet's houſe. They found the drum ready, and the whole body of the king's houſehold troops under arms, and drawn up before it. Upon the ſight of their companions, the ſoldiers left the Betwudet, and fell into a proper place reſerved vacant for them by their brethren. Without loſs of time the drum was beat, and a proclamation made, "Bacuffa, ſon of Yaſous, is our king! Mourn for the dead, and rejoice with the living." Loud acclamations from the people were echoed back again by the ſoldiers, and Bacuffa's name was received with univerſal acclamations. Some of the principal people then went to the council-chamber, and ſent proper officers, with a good body of troops, to eſcort the king from Wechné.

Upon their arrival they found the ſentiments of the princes upon the election were widely different from thoſe teſtified by the people. They all to a man declared their diſſent from that election. They upbraided Bacuffa for his brutal manners; for his violent, unſociable, unrelenting temper, from the which, they ſaid, they had the cruelleſt conſequences to apprehend; and, indeed, it was not without great reaſon that they made theſe remonſtrances; for Bacuffa, when he eſcaped from the mountain, fled for refuge among the Galla, and received there a very ſtrong tincture of the ſavage manners of that nation, which neither thoſe of Gondar nor the army could have an opportunity to judge of. Reſolute, active, and politic, he was very well formed to hold the reins of government in unſettled times; but his temper of itſelf exceedingly ſuſpicious, and the little regard he had for the life of man, made his whole reign (as it was feared) one continued tragedy. So that, notwithſtanding

ſtanding the goodneſs of his underſtanding, and many acts of wiſdom and juſtice, he is conſidered as a bloody, mercileſs tyrant, and his memory regarded with the greateſt deteſtation.

On the firſt news of the inſurrection of the princes on Wechné, Kaſmati Amha Yaſous, governor of Begemder, marched with his whole force and encamped under the mountain. He then received Bacuffa as king, having reſcued him from the hands of his relations; and, in order to obviate, as much as poſſible, any future trouble, he obliged the different branches of the royal family to a reconciliation with each other, making Bacuffa, on the one ſide, ſwear that he was not to remember nor revenge any injury or affront received upon the mountain; and them on the mountain ſwear alſo, that they would forget all old diſagreements, conſider Bacuffa as their king, and not create him any trouble in his reign by eſcapes, or other rebellious practices.

As it was then night, Bacuffa ſtaid in the houſe of Azage Aſſarat, and the next morning came to Serbraxos, whence he ſent to the monks of Tedda to meet him there. From Tedda he proceeded to Gondar, where he was met by the Abuna and Itcheguè amidſt the acclamations of a prodigious number of people.

BACUFFA.

From 1719 to 1729.

Bloody Reign—Exterminates the Conſpirators—Counterfeits Death—Becomes very popular.

HONEST men, who loved their country, ſaw the dangerous ſituation it was then in. Every day had produced inſtances of a growing indifference to that form of government which, from the earlieſt times, they had looked upon as ſacred; and upon every ſlight and unreaſonable diſguſt a perſon of conſequence thought he had met with, a party was immediately formed, and nothing leſs was agreed on than directly imbruing their hands in the blood of their ſovereign.

A PRINCE was neceſſary who had qualities of mind proper to enable him to put a ſtop to theſe enormities before they involved the ſtate in one ſcene of anarchy and ruin.

Bacuffa was thought to anſwer theſe expectations; and, in the end, he was found to exceed them. Silent, ſecret, and unfathomable in his deſigns, ſurrounded by ſoldiers who were his own ſlaves, and by new men of his own creation, he removed thoſe tyrants who oppoſed their ſovereigns upon the ſmalleſt provocation. Conſpiracy followed conſpiracy, and rebellion rebellion; but all were defeated, as ſoon as they had birth, by the ſuperior activity and addreſs of the king.

I HAVE ſaid he was called Bacuffa by the Galla; but, in compliance with the cuſtom of Abyſſinia, already mentioned, he had aſſumed ſtill two other names, which were, Atzham Georgis, his name of baptiſm, and Adebar Segued, which means "reverenced by the towns or inhabited places of the country," given him at his inauguration. As for that of Bacuffa, which meant the *inexorable*, it was the leſs diſhonourable from having been given him by impartial ſtrangers from their own obſervation while he was yet in private life; his whole conduct afterwards ſhewed how juſtly.

THE king has near his perſon an officer who is meant to be his hiſtoriographer. He is alſo keeper of his ſeal, and is obliged to make a journal of the king's actions, good or bad, without comment of his own upon them. This, when the king dies, or at leaſt ſoon after, is delivered to the council, who read it over, and eraſe every thing falſe in it; whilſt they ſupply any material fact that may have been omitted, whether purpoſely or not. This would have been a very dangerous book to have been kept in Bacuffa's time; and, accordingly, no perſon choſe ever to run that riſk; and the king's particular behaviour afterwards had ſtill the further

ther effect, that nobody would ſupply this deficiency after his death, a general belief prevailing in Abyſſinia that he is alive to this day, and will appear again in all his terrors. It is owing to this circumſtance that we have nothing complete of this king's reign; only a few anecdotes are preſerved, ſome of them very odd ones. I ſhall only, for the preſent, chooſe ſuch of thoſe as lead me to the ſubject I have in hand.

Bacuffa was exceedingly fond of divinations, dreams, and prophecies, ſo are all the Abyſſinians; but he imbibed an additional propenſity to theſe, among the Pagans to whom he had fled. One day, when walking alone, he perceived a prieſt exceedingly attentive in obſerving the forms that little pieces of ſtraw, cut to certain lengths, made upon a pool of water into which ran a ſmall ſtream. From the combination of theſe in letters, or figures, as they chanced to fall, an anſwer is procured to the doubt propoſed, which, if you believe theſe idlers, is perfectly infallible.

Bacuffa in diſguiſe, dreſſed like a poor man, is ſaid to have aſked the prieſt after what he was inquiring. The prieſt anſwered, He was trying whether the king would have a ſon, and who ſhould govern the kingdom after him. The king abode the inveſtigation patiently; and the anſwer was, That he ſhould have a ſon; but that a Welleta Georgis ſhould govern the kingdom after him for thirty years, though that Welleta Georgis ſhould be neither his ſon nor any deſcendant of his. Full of thought at this untoward prediction, he harboured it in his breaſt without communicating it to any one, and reſolved to blaſt the hopes of every Welleta Georgis that ſhould be ſo unfortunate as to ſtand within the poſſibility

poſſibility of reigning after him. Many innocent people of different parts diſappeared from this unknown crime; and eleven princes on the mountain of Wechné, ſome ſay more, loſt their lives for a name that is very common in Abyſſinia, without one overt act of treaſon, or even a ſuſpicion of what they were accuſed. A panic now ſtruck all ranks of people, without terminating in any ſcheme of reſiſtance; which ſufficiently ſhewed that the king had ſucceeded in diſſolving all confederacies among his ſubjects, and deſtroying radically that rebellious ſpirit which had operated ſo fatally in the laſt reigns.

It is a cuſtom among the kings of Abyſſinia, eſpecially in intervals of peace, to diſappear for a time, without any warning. Sometimes, indeed, one or two confidential ſervants, pretending to be buſied in other affairs, attend at a diſtance, and keep their eye upon him, while, diſguiſed in different manners, he goes like a ſtranger to thoſe parts he intends to viſit. In one of theſe private journeys, paſſing into Kuara, a province on the N. E. of Abyſſinia, near the confines of Sennaar, Bacuſſa happened, or counterfeited, to be ſeized by a fever, a common diſeaſe of that unwholeſome country. He was then in a poor village belonging to ſervants of a man of diſtinction, whoſe houſe was on the top of the hill immediately above, in temperate and wholeſome air. The hoſpitable landlord, upon the firſt hearing of the diſtreſs of a ſtranger, immediately removed him up to his houſe, where every attention that could be ſuggeſted by a charitable mind was beſtowed upon his diſeaſed gueſt, who preſently recovered his former ſtate of health, but not till the kind aſſiſtance and unwearied diligence of the beautiful daughter of the

houſe had made the deepeſt impreſſion upon him, and laid him under the greateſt obligations.

THE family conſiſted of five young men in the flower of their youth, and one daughter, whoſe name was Berhan Magaſs, *the Glory of Grace*, exceedingly beautiful, gentle, mild, and affable; of great underſtanding and prudence beyond her age; the darling, not only of her own family, but of all the neighbourhood.

BACUFFA recovering his health, returned ſpeedily to the palace, which he entered privately at night, and appeared early next morning ſitting in judgment, and hearing cauſes, which, with theſe princes, is the firſt public occupation of the day.

A MESSENGER, with guards and attendants, was immediately ſent to Kuara, and Berhan Magaſs hurried from her father's houſe, ſhe knew not why, but her ſurpriſe was carried to the utmoſt, by being preſented and married to the king, no reply, condition, or ſtipulation being ſuffered. She gained, however, and preſerved his confidence as long as he lived: not that Bacuffa valued himſelf upon conſtancy to one wife, more than the reſt of his predeceſſors had done. He had, indeed, many miſtreſſes, but with theſe he obſerved a very ſingular rule; he never took to his bed any one woman whatever, the fair Berhan Magaſs excepted, without her having been firſt ſo far intoxicated with wine or ſpirits as not to remember any thing that paſſed in converſation.

WHILE

While Bacuffa was on his concealed journey to Kuara, a very dangerous conſpiracy was forming at Gondar, under the immediate conduct of Ozoro Welleta Raphael, the king's ſiſter, a very ambitious woman, and of an unquiet, enterpriſing temper. Diſguſted by her brother's refuſal of a gift of ſome crown lands which were then vacant, and without any owners, ſhe thought no vengeance adequate to the affront, but dethroning Bacuffa. With this view ſhe engaged ſeveral men of power in her intereſt, and particularly the black ſervants of the palace who attend immediately upon the king's perſon, and were to ſeize upon, or deſtroy him, the moment he returned. This plot, in all its particulars, was conveyed to the king.

There was an old, abandoned houſe of king Yaſous, at Bartcho, about a day's journey ſouth of Gondar; it ſtands on a very extenſive plain. The king intending, as he ſaid, to repair, or rather clean and prepare this houſe for his immediate reception, ordered all the black ſlaves from Gondar thither for that purpoſe, together with ſome of their ringleaders. Kaſmati Waragna, in the mean time, was ordered to bring a thouſand horſemen of his Galla Djawi. He arrived at Bartcho nearly at the ſame time with the black ſervants, who being unarmed, as ſuſpecting nothing, and on foot, after a ſharp reproof from the king, were all ſurrounded and cut to pieces by the hands of Waragna, and orders were immediately ſent to Gondar to extirpate the remainder there; and this execution laid a foundation for a feud that endures to this day between the Galla troops and the black horſe, who were then aboliſhed, as the Galla have been ſince, though both were part of the king's houſehold formerly, before David's or Bacuffa's time. As for Welleta Raphael,

ſhe was ſeized that ſame night, and was conveyed to Walkayt, to be confined there, with private inſtructions, however, to put her to death ſpeedily, which were executed accordingly.

THE queen had a ſon within the year, whom the council named Yaſous, after his grandfather, whoſe memory will ever be dear in Abyſſinia; and this again revived the old apprehenſions that Welleta Georgis was to govern the country (as the prophet ſaid) for thirty years. Tormented with this idea, rather than the havoc it had occaſioned, he deviſed with himſelf a ſcheme which he thought would certainly detect this future uſurper of his crown and dethroner of his child. But firſt he directed that the queen ſhould be crowned, a ceremony that carries great conſequences along with it when ſolemnized properly, as at that time ſhe is made regent, or Iteghè, in all minorities that may happen afterwards.

AFTER he had created his wife Iteghè, Bacuffa pretended to be ſick: ſeveral days paſſed without hopes of recovery; but at laſt the news of the king's death were publiſhed in Gondar. The joy was ſo great, and ſo univerſal, that nobody attempted to conceal it. Every one found himſelf eaſed of a load of fear which had become inſupportable. Several princes eſcaped from the mountain of Wechné to put themſelves in the way of being choſen; ſome were ſent to by thoſe great men who thought themſelves capable of effecting the nomination, and a ſpeedy day was appointed for the burial of the king's corpſe, when Bacuffa appeared, in the ordinary ſeat of juſtice, early in the morning of that

day, with the Iteghè, and the infant Yaſous, his ſon, ſitting in a chair below him.

THERE was no occaſion to accuſe the guilty. The whole court, and all ſtrangers attending there upon buſineſs, fled, and ſpread an univerſal terror through the whole ſtreets of Gondar. All ranks of people were driven to deſpair, for all had rejoiced; and much leſs crimes had been before puniſhed with death. What this ſedition would have ended in, it is hard to know, had it not been for the immediate reſolution of the king, who ordered a general pardon and amneſty to be proclaimed at the door of the palace.

THERE are two kettle-drums of a large ſize placed one on each ſide of the outer gate of the king's houſe. They are called the *lion* and the *lamb*. The lion is beat at the proclamations which regard war, attainders for conſpiracies and rebellions, promotions to ſupreme commands, and ſuch-like high matters. The lamb* is heard only on beneficent, pacific occaſions, of gifts from the crown, of general amneſties, of private pardons, and reverſals of penal ordinances. The whole town was in expectation of ſome ſanguinary decree, when, to their utter ſurpriſe, they heard the voice of the lamb, a certain ſign of peace and forgiveneſs; and ſpeedily followed by a proclamation, forbidding people of all degrees to leave their houſes, that the king's word was pledged for every one's ſecurity; and that all the principal men ſhould

* This drum is of beaten ſilver; the Abyſſinians ſay, that this metal alone is capable of conveying the ſweet ſound contained in a proclamation of peace. It was carried off by the rebels after the retreat of Serbraxos.

ſhould immediately attend him within the palace, in a public place which is called the Aſhoa, and that upon pain of rebellion.

The king appeared cloathed all in white, being the habit of peace; his head was bare, dreſſed, anointed, and perfumed, and his face uncovered. He thus advanced to the rail of the gallery, about 10 feet above the heads of the audience, and, in a very graceful, compoſed, but reſolute manner, began a ſhort oration to the people. "He put them in mind "of their wantonneſs in having made Ouſtas, a man not of "the royal line of Solomon, king of Abyſſinia; of their ha-"ving incited his brother, Tecla Haimanout, to aſſaſſinate "their father Yaſous; that they had afterwards murdered "Tecla Haimanout himſelf, one brother, and lately his "other brother David, his own immediate predeceſſor: That "he had taken due vengeance upon all the ringleaders of "thoſe crimes, as was the duty of his place, and, if much "blood had been ſhed, it was becauſe many enormities had "been committed; but that knowing now that order was "eſtabliſhed, and conſpiracies extinguiſhed among them, he "had counterfeited death, to ſignify an end was put to Ba-"cuffa and his bloody meaſures; that he now was riſen "again, and appeared to them by the name of Atzham "Georgis, ſon of Yaſous the Great; and ordered every man "home to his houſe to rejoice at the acceſſion of a new "king, under whom they ſhould have juſtice, and live "without fear, as long as they reſpected the king that God "had anointed over them."

This ſpeech was followed by the loudeſt acclamations, "Long live Bacuffa! Long live Atzham Georgis!" It was

well known that this king never failed in his word, or any way prevaricated in his promiſes. Every one, therefore, went home in as perfect peace as if war had never been among them; and Bacuffa's delicacy in this reſpect was ſeen a few days after; for Hannes his brother having been brought clandeſtinely from Wechné by Kaſmati Georgis, a nobleman of great conſequence, they were both taken by the governor of Wechnè and ſent in chains to the king. The ordinary proceſs would have been to put them inſtantly to death, as being apprehended in the very higheſt act of treaſon; nor would this have alarmed any perſon whatever, or been thought an infraction of the king's late promiſe: Bacuffa, however, was of another mind. He ſent the criminal judges, who ordinarily ſit upon capital crimes, to meet the two priſoners in their way to Gondar, and carried them back to the foot of the mountain of Wechnè to have their crimes proved, and to be tried there out of his preſence and influence, where they were both condemned, Hannes to have an arm cut off, Georgis to be ſent to priſon to the governor of Walkayt, with private orders to put him to death; both which ſentences were executed, though Hannes ſo far recovered that he was king of Abyſſinia in my time, notwithſtanding this mutilation; but it was a direct violation of the laws of the land.

It is ſaid that a diſcovery, which happened in the king's feigned illneſs, promoted this ſudden revolution of manners: In one of his ſecret tours through Begemder, (after Tigrè, the moſt powerful province in Abyſſinia, and by much the moſt plentiful) being diſguiſed like a poor man, dirty and fatigued with the length of the way and heat of the weather, he came to the houſe of a private perſon, not very rich, indeed,

indeed, but of noble manners and carriage, and who, by the juſtice and mildneſs of his behaviour and cuſtoms, had acquired a great degree of influence among his neighbours. The father was old and feeble, but the ſon in the vigour of his age, who was then ſtanding in a large pool of water, at his father's door, waſhing his own cotton cloak, or wrapper, which is their upper garment; an occupation below no young man in Abyſſinia.

Bacuffa, as overcome with heat, threw himſelf down under the ſhade of a tree, and, in a faint voice and foreign dialect, intreated the young man to waſh his cloak likewiſe, after having finiſhed his own. The young man conſented moſt willingly; and, throwing by his own garment, fell to waſhing the ſtranger's with great diligence and attention. In the mean time, Bacuffa began queſtioning him about the king, and what his opinion was of him. The young man anſwered, he had never formed any. Bacuffa, however, ſtill plied him with queſtions, while he continued waſhing the cloak, without giving him any anſwer at all; at laſt, being able to hold out no longer, he gathered Bacuffa's cloak in his arms, wet as it was, and threw it to him: "I thought, ſays he, when you prayed me to take your cloak, that I was doing a charitable action to ſome poor Galla fainting with fatigue, and perhaps with hunger; but, ſince I have had it in my hands, I have found you an inſtructor of kings and nobles, a leader of armies and maker of laws. Take your cloak, therefore, and waſh it yourſelf, which is what Providence has ordained to be your buſineſs; it is a ſafer trade, and you will have leſs time to cenſure your ſuperiors, which can never be a proper or uſeful occupation to a fellow like you."

The king took his wet cloak, and the rebuke along with it, and, on his return, he ſent for the man to Gondar, and raiſed him in a ſhort time to the firſt offices in the ſtate. He poſſeſſed his entire confidence; and he deſerved it. He was the only man to whom the king had confided his fears of the uſurper Welleta Georgis. While Bacuffa was ſuppoſed to be ill, the queen and this officer only preſent, he mentioned, for the firſt time, ſome ſurpriſe that no ſuch perſon as Welleta Georgis had appeared during ſo long and ſo many inquiries, and could not help dropping ſome words as if he doubted the truth of this prophecy.

Badjerund Waragna, for that was the name of the king's friend, maintained modeſtly that it might be a temptation of the devil to miſlead him to his deſtruction. He told the king, that, by his own account of it, this Welleta Georgis was to have no power over *him*, as he was only to appear in his ſon's time. He begged him, therefore, to lay aſide all further thoughts of his prophecy, whilſt he truſted his ſon's ſucceſſion to God's mercy, and to the prayers, the charity, and prudence of the queen. The Iteghé all this time was loſt in ſilence. She deſired the king to repeat to her the whole circumſtances of the prophecy, which he diſtinctly did. "I wiſh," ſays ſhe laughing, "this Welleta Georgis may not be now nearer us than we imagine; perhaps in the palace." "In the palace!" ſays the king, with great emotion. "I doubt ſo," ſays the queen; "ſuppoſe it ſhould be me your own wife; for Welleta Georgis was the name given to me in baptiſm; and your late coronation of me, ſhould a minority happen in the perſon of your ſon, or even a grandſon, undoubtedly leaves me regent of the kingdom

kingdom by your own intentions when you made me Iteghè.

Whether the king was convinced or not, is not known; but he, from this time, deſiſted from his perſecution of Welleta Georgis; and this the queen often told me among ſeveral anecdotes of that ſingular reign. She was my great patroneſs while at Gondar, and from her I received conſtant protection in the moſt diſaſtrous times. To the credit of the prophet, ſhe continued regent full thirty years; till the folly and ambition of her own family gave her a maſter that put an end to all her influence, except what ſhe enjoyed from exemplary piety, and the moſt extenſive works of charity and mercy.

The king died after a vigorous reign, and after having cut off the greateſt part of the ancient nobility near Gondar, who were of age to have been concerned in the tranſactions of the laſt reigns. This has rendered his memory odious, though it is univerſally confeſſed he ſaved his country from an ariſtocratical or democratical uſurpation; both equally unconſtitutional, as they equally ſtruck at the root of monarchy.

The queen, with very great prudence, concealed the day of the king's death; nor did any one, after the laſt experiment, affect raſhly to believe that his death was real. Thus all were upon their guard againſt another reſurrection. In that interval, ſhe called her brothers from Kuara, and ſtrengthened her ſon's and her own government, by putting the principal offices of ſtate into the hands of perſons attached to her family, ſo that, though her ſon Yaſous was an infant, no attempt was at that time made towards any reſo-

lution. Even after the king's death was known to be real, for many years afterwards there were people of credit at different times found, who ſaid they had met him at ſundry places alive; whether by inſtigation, for any particular purpoſe, or not, is difficult to ſay.

YASOUS II. OR, ADIAM SEGUED.

From 1729 to 1753.

Rebellion in the beginning of this Reign—King addicted to hunting—To building, and the Arts of Peace—Attacks Sennaar—Loſes his Army—Takes Samayat—Receives Baady King of Sennaar under his Protection.

BESIDES the queen, mother of Yaſous, Bacuffa had ſeveral other wives and divers children by them; none of them, however, had any degree of intereſt, or many followers, owing to the very ſingular practice of Bacuffa, already mentioned, in not admitting to his bed, from the time of his coming to the crown, any women except the queen, mother of Yaſous, without having firſt ſo far intoxicated them with liquor as to produce an oblivion of all that paſſed at the interview. Some ſay this aroſe from his own jealous ideas; but the

moſt general opinion was, that it was a kind of covenant with the queen, by which ſhe pardoned him this temporary alienation of his perſon, for this ſecurity, that he was to give her no rival in his confidence. Indeed, his own temper led him naturally to eſtrange himſelf from every intimate connection, that could pretend to any lawful ſhare with him in government. And this had gone ſo far, that he ſent his wife, favourite as ſhe was, and his ſon Yaſous, to the low, hot, and unwholeſome province of Walkayt, the ordinary place to which ſtate criminals were baniſhed, in order that they might be under the eye of Ain Egzie, a confidential ſervant of his, and governor of that province. It is true this was done without any mark of diſguſt; and the queen returned immediately by his own command; but Yaſous ſtaid at Walkayt with Ain Egzie, till he was four years old, without the king his father having ſhewn any anxiety for his return.

The queen's firſt care was to call her brothers to court. The eldeſt, Welled de l'Oul, had been a favourite of the late king, and occupied under him a very conſiderable poſt in the palace. Geta, her ſecond brother, was a man of ſlow parts, but eſteemed a good ſoldier; being covetous, he was not a favourite of the people, and leſs ſo of the king. The third was Eſhtè, (pronounced in that country Shitti); he was amiable, liberal, affable, and brave, but rather given to indolence and pleaſure, which alone hindered him from being a good ſtateſman and general. He was a kind friend to ſtrangers, a good maſter, and placable enemy; ſtedfaſt to his promiſe, and on all occaſions a lover of truth; a quality ſo very rare in Abyſſinia, that it was ſaid there had not been one in this reſpect like him ſince the time of Yaſous

the Great. Notwithſtanding this, Bacuffa liked him not, as being too great a favourite of the people, and, for that reaſon, never gave him any employment.

The next brother was Euſebius, a very brave and ſkilful ſoldier, but raſh, avaricious, paſſionate, and treacherous, and as great an enemy to truth as his brother Eſhtè was a friend to it. Bacuffa, upon ſome ſlight complaint, had reſolved to put him to death; and, though he was diſſuaded from this, he could never be ſo far reconciled to him as ever to releaſe him from priſon. The fifth brother was Netcho, whom the deſire of living at home, or, perhaps, a want of money to defray his expences at court, kept low and in obſcurity all his life-time. Yet he was a tried, gallant, and ſkilful ſoldier; and in later years, when I was at Gondar, was often praiſed as ſuch by Ras Michael, the beſt judge, becauſe the greateſt general of his time, though, by reaſon of Netcho's private life, and abſence from court, he never charged him with any important commiſſion. Another brother was dead, and had left a ſon called Mammo, a good horſeman, the only quality, as far as I know, that he poſſeſſed to which could juſtly be annexed the epithet of Good.

Of theſe brothers, Geta and Netcho were alive in my time. Eſhtè was dead, but had left two ſons, Ayto Engedan and Ayto Aylo, who were among the moſt intimate of my friends, from my entering Ethiopia till my leaving it; both were brave and good, and endowed with excellent qualities. Engedan, without any allowance for his country, and want of education, was, I think, by very much, the moſt amiable and complete man that I have ever yet ſeen.

SANUDA, ſon of Welled de l'Oul, played a very conſiderable part in the revolution that happened in my time; was of a figure more than ordinary graceful; was brave, and did not want good diſpoſitions; but theſe were obſcured by debauchery in wine and women, to which there were no bounds. Euſebius left two ſons, both more worthleſs and profligate than himſelf, and both came to untimely ends: Guebra Mehedin, the eldeſt, was ſlain in a private quarrel at Lebec by a near relation, Kaſmati Ayabdar, after having robbed my ſervants and plundered my baggage, in Foggora, near the village Dara; and the ſecond, Ayto Confu, was killed in rebellion at the battle of Serbraxos, among the Begemder horſe, fighting againſt his ſovereign.

MAMMO we ſhall find acting inſignificant parts at times, never truſted, nor of conſequence to any one. As for the queen herſelf, ſhe was reputed the handſomeſt woman of her time. She was deſcended from Victor, eldeſt brother to Menas, and ſon of David, who died without coming to the crown. This daughter was married to Robel, governor of Tigrè, whoſe mother was a Portugueſe, and the queen inherited the colour of her European anceſtors; indeed was whiter than moſt Portugueſe. She was very vain of this her deſcent; had a warm attachment to the Catholic religion in her heart, as far as ſhe could ever learn it; nor did ſhe value herſelf leſs upon her beauty, as we may judge by the ſeveral names ſhe took at different times. The firſt was Iteghè Mantuab, or *the beautiful queen;* the ſecond was Berhan Magwaſs, or *the glory of grace;* though her chriſtened name was Welleta Georgis, as we have already obſerved.

After the death of her husband, Bacuffa, she is said to have descended to a variety of attachments of short duration. She married a man of quality, Kasmati Netcho of Kuara, by whom she had three daughters. The first was Ozoro Esther, of whom I shall often speak, being, next to her mother, the greatest friend I had in Abyssinia, and one who had the most frequent opportunities of being so. She was married, in very early life, to Kasmati Netcho of Tcherkin, a man of great personal qualities, and who had a very large territory, reaching down to the Pagan blacks, or Troglodytes, called Shangalla.

This marriage was of very short duration. Netcho left one son, Ayto Confu, my very great and firm, though young friend, who likewise inherited his father's fortune and virtues. She was afterwards married to Ayo Mariam Barea, (excepting Ras Michael) reputed the best general in Abyssinia, but who died before I came into the country. By him she had one son and a daughter, infants. Lastly, she was married to Ras Michael, by whom she had two sons, the favourites of Michael's old age. Rustic and cruel as that old tyrant was, bred up in blood, and delighting in it, she governed him despotically, from the day of her marriage, yet so prudently, as to excite the envy of no one, excepting the murderers of her husband Mariam Barea, who, luckily, were also the constitutional enemies of her country.

The second daughter of the Iteghé was Ozoro Welleta Israel, the most beautiful woman in Abyssinia, with whom I had very little acquaintance, she being at constant war with Ras Michael. She had married a nobleman of the first consideration, to whom half of the large and rich province of

Gojam

Gojam belonged, by whom ſhe had Aylo, one of the largeſt men that I ever ſaw, the only particular remarkable in him.

The third was Ozoro Altaſh, married to Welled Hawaryat, Ras Michael's ſon, by whom ſhe had three children, two ſons and one daughter. One of them died of the ſmall-pox ſoon after my arrival at Gondar, as did his father alſo; the other ſon and daughter happily recovered.

Bacuffa had provided ſufficiently for the ſecurity of his provinces, by placing tried and veteran officers in his governments. Elias, indeed, was Ras and Betwudet at Gondar, and he was ſuſpected of wiſhes contrary to his allegiance; but far before any, in the confidence of the late king, was Waragna Shalaka, that is, colonel of a regiment of Djawi Galla, with which he defended the provinces of Damot and Agow againſt his countrymen on the other ſide of the Nile; for he was a Galla of that nation himſelf, and his name was Uſho, which ſignifies *a dog*. But it was more by his intereſt, which he preſerved with thoſe people, than by his arms, that he kept thoſe barbarians from waſting that country.

The reader will eaſily remember the firſt occaſion of his coming to Gondar was when Bacuffa ſaw him waſhing his clothes in a pool of water; and from the reproof, and his behaviour to the king on that occaſion, as well as the duty and implicit obedience he paid to his commands afterwards, he was called Waragna, by way of contradiction, that word ſignifying a ſturdy rebel, or one that ſtands up in defiance of the king. That name became much more famous afterwards

wards in the perſon of his ſon, Waragna Faſil, to the very great detriment of the country in general.

THE firſt thing the queen did was to ſend Shalaka Waragna, and Billetana Gueta David, with a large body of Mahometan fuſileers, Djawi and Toluma Galla, to guard the mountain of Wechné, where the males of the royal family were impriſoned, that no competitor might be releaſed from thence. The next ſtep was to marry Ozoro Welleta Tecla Haimanout to Ras Elias, to confirm him, if poſſible, in his much ſuſpected allegiance. After which, the Ras, judges, and ſoldiers of the king's houſehold, made this proclamation—" Bacuffa, king of kings, is dead! Yaſous, king of kings, liveth! Mourn for thoſe that are dead, and rejoice with thoſe that are alive!" Orders were then given for burying Bacuffa with all magnificence poſſible.

THE firſt thing that ſeemed the beginning of trouble in the new regency, and likely to deſtroy the calm that had hitherto ſubſiſted, was an information given by Azage Georgis againſt Tecla Saluce, a great officer at court. Georgis accuſed him before the king and council, that he had been heard to ſay that king Yaſous was dangerouſly ill. Tecla Saluce abſolutely denied this charge, and ſaid it was an invention of his enemy Georgis, and challenged him to prove it. Evidence being called, he was convicted in the moſt direct and ſatisfactory manner; was therefore condemned to death, and hewn to pieces at the king's gate that ſame day by the common ſoldiers.

HERE is a ſpecies of treaſon without any overt act. The imagining the king's death, which ſeems much to reſemble

ble the law of England, may be defended from the importance of the caſe, but ſcarcely from any principle of juſtice or reaſon.

It ſoon appeared that a conſpiracy had been on foot; ſeveral great men fled from court, among theſe Johannes, who had the charge of the king's horſes. But Shalaka Waragna and Billetana Gueta David, being ſent immediately after him, this conſpiracy was ſoon ſtifled, and the ringleaders diſperſed, moſtly into Amhara, where they were taken priſoners by Woodage governor of the province, and ſent to the king. Johannes, finding it impoſſible to eſcape, took to one of thoſe papyrus boats uſed in navigating the lake Tzana; and, being driven by the wind, landed in an iſland* belonging to the queen, where he was taken priſoner, with his wife and family, and delivered up, on condition that he ſhould not be put to death.

Kasmati Cambi, returning from Damot, fell accidentally upon Palambaras Maſmari and ſeveral others, and brought them priſoners to Gondar. A council was thereupon held, and the conſpirators put upon their trial. Palambaras Maſmari, and Abou Barea who was one of the judges, were condemned to be hanged on the tree before the palace-gate. Johannes and the reſt were committed to cloſe priſon, in the hands of the Betwudet.

It was thought a proper expedient to check theſe diſorders, to haſten the coronation of the king, though very young. The

* Dek.

The judges and all the officers being aſſembled in the preſence-chamber, where the king ſits on his throne, (for in the council-chamber he ſits in a kind of cage, or cloſe balcony) where no part of him is diſcovered, Sarach Maſſeri Mammo, whoſe office it was, ſtood up with the Kees Hatzé, or king's almoner; when this laſt had anointed him with oil, Mammo placed the crown upon his head; upon which the whole aſſembly, his mother only excepted, fell down and paid him homage; and at his inauguration he took the name of Adiam Segued.

On a ſeparate throne, on his right hand, ſat the queen-mother. She, too, was crowned, though not anointed; but the ſame homage was performed to her that had been done to the king, who ſat on the throne with his head covered; nor did the Abuna interfere, nor was his attendance judged any part of the ceremony.

The firſt ſeeds of diſcontent had been ſown in Damot, where a party of rebels had attacked Kaſmati Cambi in the night, cut moſt of his army to pieces, and obliged Shalaka Job to fly into Gojam, and then return in haſte to Gondar.

The king found no better remedy againſt this rebellion than to appoint Kaſmati Waragna governor of Damot, and Sanuda guardian of Wechné, with orders to take with him a ſon of the late Ouſtas the uſurper, and confine him with the king's ſons upon that mountain. At the ſame time he appointed Ayo governor of Begemder; both theſe preferments being much to the ſatisfaction of the whole nation. Waragna, knowing the neceſſities of his province, marched from Gondar with what forces he could collect, and took

up his head-quarters at Samſeen, where, on the very night after his arrival, he was ſet upon by Tenſa Mammo at the head of the Agows. However unexpected this was, Waragna, a good ſoldier, was not to be taken by ſurpriſe. He knew the country, and had not a great opinion either of the force or courage of the enemy, or capacity of their general. Preſenting, therefore, only one half of his troops, which could not be eaſily diſcovered in the dark, he ſent Fit-Auraris Tamba to make a ſmall compaſs, and fall upon their rear with the other half. Mammo's troops, thinking this to be a freſh and ſeparate army, immediately took to flight, and were many of them ſlain, after leaving behind them their tents, baggage, and the greateſt part of their fire-arms, which had been of very little ſervice to them in the dark.

Waragna, who knew the conſequence of his province was the riches of it, and the dependence the capital had upon it for conſtant ſupplies of proviſions, was loath to purſue his victory farther, if any means could be fallen upon to bring about a pacification. To effect this, he diſpatched meſſengers to his friends, the Galla, on the other ſide of the Nile, ordering them to be ready to paſs the river on the day he ſhould appoint, and to lay waſte the country of the Agow with fire and ſword. He then decamped with his army from Samſeen, and marched to Sacala, and took up his head-quarters in St Michael's church, where he found the Agows in the utmoſt terror from apprehenſion of being over-run with barbarians. But he ſoon eaſed them of their fears by a proclamation, in which he told them plainly, that it was owing to the goodneſs of the country, and not any merit in the people, that the king's palace and capital was ſo plentifully ſupplied with proviſions from thence;

that all his purſuit was peace, but that he was reſolved to effect that end by every poſſible means; therefore the time was now come that they were to make a reſolution, and abide by it, to ſubmit and behave peaceably as good citizens ought; or, when his army of Galla joined him, he would extirpate them to the laſt man. In the mean time, he publiſhed an amneſty of all that had paſſed.

The Agows knew well that they were in the hands of one who was no trifler, nor in his heart much their friend. They ran to him, ready to make that compoſition which he ſhould raiſe from them for their paſt tranſgreſſions and his future protection. The tribute laid upon them, for both was moderate beyond all expectation, 2000 oxen for the king and queen, and 500 for himſelf; upon which he left Sacala, and entered Goutto, a very fertile country, between Maitſha and the Agows, where he uſed the ſame moderation, and by theſe means quieted and reconciled his whole province.

Nothing could have been more advantageous to the king's affairs than the prudent conduct of this wiſe officer, which left him at liberty to afford him his aſſiſtance; for in the mean time a conſpiracy was formed at Gondar, which had taken deep root, and had a powerful faction, Elias, late Ras and Betwudet, Tenſa Mammo, Guebra l'Oul, Matteos and Agnè, all principal men in Gondar, and poſſeſſed of great riches and dependencies throughout the whole kingdom.

On the 8th of December 1734, being joined by their followers from without, they all rendezvouſed upon the river

ver Kahha, below the town. After holding council in the king's houſe which is there, they reſolved to proclaim one of the princes upon the mountain Wechné, named Hezekias, king. For this purpoſe, furniſhed with a kettle-drum, they marched in three diviſions, by three different ways, to the palace, avowedly with an intention to force the gates and murder the king and queen. But Fit-Auraris Ephraim, having intelligence of this tumult, firſt ſhut up and obſtructed all the entrances to the king's houſe, then gave advice to Billetana Gueta, Welled de l'Oul, of the rebellion of Tenſa Mammo, their deſign to murder the king, and their having proclaimed Hezekias.

These immediately repaired to the king's houſe to take council together what was to be done, and to defend the place if it was neceſſary. The rebels were now drawn up, and were beating their kettle-drum to make their proclamation, "Hezekias was king!" while Shalaka Tchinſho, a young nobleman of great hopes, who commanded the troops in the court where was the outer gate, impatient to hear an uſurper proclaimed in the very face of his ſovereign, directed the outer-court gate to be opened, and, with two bodies of Galla, Djawi and Toluma, and ſeveral corps of lances, which compoſe the king's houſehold, however inferior in number, he ruſhed upon the rebels ſo ſuddenly, that they were ſoon obliged to think of other occupation.

The firſt that fell was Aſaleffi Lenſa, who ſtood by the drum, and was ſlain by Shalaka Tchinſho with his own hand; his drum taken and ſent to the king as the firſt fruits of the day. The ſoldiers, encouraged by the example of their leader, fell fiercely upon the rebels, diſperſed and

broke through them wherever they ſaw the greateſt number together; a great ſlaughter was made, and Tenſa Mammo, with difficulty, eſcaped. The victory indeed would have been complete, had not an accidental ſhot from a diſtance wounded Shalaka Tchinſho mortally. His own people carried him within the gate of the palace, where he glorioufly expired at the feet of his ſovereign.

The rebels, notwithſtanding this check, increaſed every day in number and reſolution, when the news arrived that Waragna had compoſed all the differences in Damot, Agow, and Goutto, and, at the head of a numerous army, was waiting the king's orders. This intelligence firſt had the effect to diſconcert the rebels, who ſuddenly left the capital in their way to Wechnè.

The king, now maſter of Gondar, ordered a proclamation to be made for all perſons whatever holding fiefs of the crown, as alſo all others, to aſſemble before him on a ſhort day, where the Itchegué and Abuna, holding the picture of our Saviour, with the crown of thorns *, up before the people, did adminiſter to them a ſolemn oath, to live and die with the king and Iteghé; a feeble experiment, often tried by a weak government. The only conſequence of this was preſent expence to the crown in a diſtribution of beef, honey, butter, wheat, and all kinds of proviſions; after which each man returned to his houſe, ready to repeat the perjury ten times a day for the ſame emolument, and ſame ſincerity.

Mes-

* A relict of the moſt precious kind, believed to have come from Jeruſalem, and been painted by St Luke.

Messengers were next diſpatched to Kaſmati Waragna, ordering him to come to Gondar with the greateſt force he could raiſe. The ſame day Azage Kyrillos, whom the king had made governor of Wechné, and Azage Newaia Selaſſé, went to the mountain, pretending that king Yaſous was dead, and that the choice of the principal members of government had fallen upon Hezekias, who thereupon was delivered to him, and ſaluted king; and, without loſing time, they marched to Kahha, and encamped on that river below Gondar.

In the mean while, the great men and officers of the court, and in particular thoſe who had eſtates and houſes in Gondar, began to conſider the danger of the town at the ſo near approach of the rebels. Several diſtricts, or ſtreets, ſituated on eminences, by ſhutting up acceſs to them, were made tenable poſts, and, having filled them with good ſoldiers, they ſet about the defence of the town and annoying the enemy. Hezekias had removed to the houſe of Baſha Arkillidas; and it was agreed to ſend their whole forces to ſee if they could ſucceed in forcing the king's houſe. But before this another ſtratagem was tried to alienate the minds of the people of Gondar from their ſovereign. It was ſaid that certain Roman Catholic prieſts had arrived at Gondar; that they were ſhut up privately in the palace with the king and queen; and, upon the Abuna and Itchegué coming to Hezekias to aſk him how he happened to be proclaimed king, without making to them ſome confeſſion of his faith, (a queſtion they put to all young or weak princes), Hezekias anſwered, It was becauſe he had heard the Itcheguè, and the reſt of the clergy, ſeemed to be careleſs about the true faith, by ſuffering Catholic prieſts to live with the king in the

the palace. A great ferment immediately followed; all the monks, prieſts, and madmen that could be aſſembled, (and on theſe occaſions they gather quickly), with the Itcheguè and Abuna at their heads, went to Dippabye, the open place before the palace, and pronounced the Iteghè, Yaſous, and all their abettors, accurſed and given up to burn with Dathan and Abiram.

For ſeveral days and nights attempts were made to ſet fire to, and break open the gate. But the loyaliſts charged them ſo vigorouſly upon all theſe occaſions, eſpecially Billetana Gueta Welled de l'Oul, and the walls of the palace were ſo exceedingly thick and ſtrong, that little progreſs was made in proportion to the men theſe attempts coſt daily. However, on that ſide of the palace called Adenaga, the rebels had lodged themſelves ſo near as to ſet part of it on fire.

The king's houſe in Gondar ſtands in the middle of a ſquare court, which may be full an Engliſh mile in circumference. In the midſt of it is a ſquare tower, in which there are many noble apartments. A ſtrong double wall ſurrounds it, and this is joined by a platform roof; loop-holes, and conveniences for diſcharging miſſile weapons, are diſpoſed all around it. The whole tower and wall is built of ſtone and lime; but part of the tower being demoliſhed and laid in ruins, and part of it let fall for want of repair, ſmall apartments, or houſes of one ſtorey, have been built in different parts of the area, or ſquare, according to the fancy of the prince then reigning, and theſe go now by the names of the ancient apartments in the palace, which are fallen down.

These houſes are compoſed of the frail materials of the country, wood and clay, thatched with ſtraw, though, in the inſide, they are all magnificently lined, or furniſhed. They have likewiſe magnificent names, which we have mentioned already. Theſe people, barbarous as they are, have always had a great taſte for magnificence and expence. All around them was ſilver, gold, and brocade, before the Adelan war, in which they loſt the commerce of that country, by loſing their connection with India.

The next night the ſoldiers of Elias made their lodgments ſo near the walls, that, with fiery arrows, they ſet one of theſe houſes, called "Werk Sacala," within the ſquare, in flames; but Welled de l'Oul, with the Toluma Galla, ſallying at that inſtant, ſurpriſed Elias's ſoldiers, not expecting ſuch interruption, and put the greateſt part of them to the ſword, ſetting on fire the houſes that were near the palace, till part was entirely burnt to the ground. The next night, an attempt was made upon the gate to blow it up with gunpowder; but, before it was completed, the two rebels employed in the work were ſhot dead from the wall, and their train miſcarried.

On the 25th of December they burned a new houſe in the town built by the king, called Riggobee Bet. Theſe frequent fires had turned the minds of people in general very much againſt Hezekias the rebel. The night after, there was another great fire in the king's houſe; Zeffan Bet, and another large building, were deſtroyed by the rebels, as was the church of St Raphael. Gondar looked like a town that had been taken by an enemy, and battles were every day fought in the ſtreets, with no deciſive advantage to either

party. Some part of the town was on fire every night; nobody knew for what reaſon, nor what was the quarter that was next to be burnt.

In the mean time, Azage Georgis arrived in the country of the Agows at Baſil Bet, where Waragna was, and delivered him the king's order, that he ſhould make all poſſible haſte to his aſſiſtance at Gondar, with as large an army as he could ſuddenly bring; and theſe diſpatches conferred upon him at the ſame time, as a mark of favour, the poſt of Ibaba Azage, or governor of Ibaba, together with Elmana and Denſa, two diſtricts inhabited by Galla, ſubjects to the king, which poſts were then held by Tenſa Mammo, and forfeited by his rebellion.

The next morning Waragna left his head-quarters at Baſil Bet; thence he marched to Gumbali, and thence to Sima. At Sima he heard, that, the day before, it had been proclaimed at Ibaba, by orders of Tenſa Mammo, that Yaſous was dead, and Hezekias was now king; upon this intelligence he marched from Sima, and, while it was yet early in the day, he came to Ibaba.

The firſt inquiry was concerning the Shum (or chief of the town) left there by Tenſa Mammo; and this man, coming readily to him to receive his commands, and offer him any ſervice in his power, was aſked by whoſe orders the proclamation of Hezekias was made? Being anſwered, by Tenſa Mammo's, he directed the Shum and his two ſons to be hanged on three ſeparate trees in the middle of the town; the Shum with the nagareet round his neck which had ſerved in the proclamation of Hezekias; he then declared

clared Tenſa Mammo a rebel and outlaw, and confiſcated his eſtate to the king's uſe.

At Ibaba he met Fit-Auraris Tamba, with a large body of Damots and Djawi; then he decamped from Ibaba, and, at the bridge over the Nile, was met by Azage Georgis, with all Maitſha, Elmana, and Denſa following, and thence proceeded to Waira, where he ſet Arkillidas at liberty. This officer, after diſtinguiſhing himſelf before all others in the king's defence, had been taken priſoner by Tenſa Mammo, and ſent thither. Advancing into Foggora, with a large army, he halted at Gilda, and ſent ſome ſoldiers on the road to Gondar, to ſee if he could apprehend any travellers, eſpecially thoſe going or coming to or from market. But, after three days waiting on the road, the ſoldiers returned without any perſon or intelligence, by which he judged the town was already in great ſtraits. In two days after, he advanced to Wainarab, and thence he ſent his Fit-Auraris forward to ſet a houſe at Tedda on fire, to ſhew to the king at Gondar that he was thus far advanced to his aſſiſtance. This barbarous cuſtom of burning a houſe wherever an army encamps, though but for an hour, is invariably practiſed, as a ſignal by armies, throughout all Abyſſinia.

At this time there was a treaty begun between the king and Tenſa Mammo. The rebels, weary of the little advantage they had gained, and hearing Waragna was about to march againſt them, offered the queen her own terms, provided ſhe publiſhed a general amneſty, and that each man ſhould be allowed to keep the poſts he had before the rebellion. The queen, weary and terrified with war, readily agreed to this propoſal; and this facility, inſtead of accelera-

ting the treaty, gave the rebels an opportunity of aſking further terms, and a ſettlement was ſpoken of for the king Hezekias, in ſome of the low provinces near Walkayt.

Welled de l'Oul, the queen's brother, a man in whom the rebels had truſt, ſeconded his ſiſter's deſire, and carried on the treaty, but from different motives; it was his opinion, that, to make peace with the rebels, leaving their party unbroken, was to ſpread the infection of rebellion all over the kingdom; and to let them keep their poſts, was leaving a ſword in their hands to enable them to defend themſelves on any future occaſion. He therefore thought, that, as the king had Waragna now at his command, they ſhould make uſe of him to pluck up this rebellion by the roots, cut off all the ringleaders, and diſperſe the faction; but, in the mean time, in order to be able to effect this, they ſhould keep up the appearance of being anxious for agreeing, in order to lull the enemy aſleep, till Waragna made his inſtructions and deſigns known to the king.

From Wainarab, Waragna ſent a meſſenger to let the king and queen know of his arrival; and with him came Arkillidas, that no doubt might remain of the truth of the meſſage. This officer told the king, that Waragna ſhould advance to Tedda, and offer the rebels battle there; but if they retired (as he heard they intended) to Abra, he would follow them thither. He deſired the king alſo to iſſue his orders to the ſeveral Shums to guard the roads, that as few of the ringleaders of the rebels might eſcape as poſſible.

Hezekias,

Hezekias, with his army, decamped, taking the road to Woggora; and Waragna, following him, came up with him at Fenter, on January 20th 1735. The rebels, inferior in number, though they did not wish an engagement at that time, were too high-minded to avoid it when offered. Both armies fought a long time with equal fortune; and though Waragna at the first onset had slain two men with his own hands, and taken two prisoners, the battle was supported with great firmness till the evening, when Waragna ordered all his Galla, the men of Maitsha, Elmana, and Densa, to leave their horses, and charge the enemy on foot. This confident step, unknown and unpractised by Galla before, had the desired effect. The Galla now fought desperately for life, not for victory, being deprived of their only means of saving themselves by flight.

Most of the principal officers among the rebels being killed or wounded, their army at last was broken, and took to flight. Hezekias was surrounded and taken, fighting bravely; being first hurt in the leg, and then beat off his horse with a stone. The pursuit was presently stayed. Tensa Mammo escaped safely through Woggora, a disaffected province; and had now passed the Tacazzè, when he was taken by the men of Siré, and brought to the king for the reward that had been offered for his head by Waragna.

Hezekias was brought to his trial before the king, nor did he presume to deny his guilt. He was therefore sentenced to die, and committed to close prison. Tensa Mammo was arraigned, and, although he confessed the treason, he pleaded the peace he had made with the king before

the arrival of Waragna at Gondar. This plea was unanimouſly over-ruled by the judges, becauſe the treaty had not been completed. He was, therefore, ſentenced to die, and immediately carried out to the daroo-tree before the palace, and hanged between two of his moſt confidential counſellors.

The Abuna and Itcheguè were next ordered to appear, and anſwer for the crime of high treaſon in excommunicating the king; they declared they proceeded on no other grounds than an information, that the king and queen were turned Franks, and had two Catholic prieſts with them in the palace. The men complained of were produced, and proved to be two Greeks; Petros, a native of Rhodes, and Demetrius. This explanation being given, the Abuna and Itcheguè thereupon aſked pardon of the king and queen, and were ordered to make their recantation at Dippabye, which they immediately did, declaring they were wrong, and had proceeded on falſe information.

It was on the 28th of January that Sanuda and Adero were ordered to carry king Hezekias to Wechnè, which they did, and left him there without diſfiguring him in any part of his body, as is the cruel, but uſual cuſtom in ſuch caſes. But both the Iteghè and her ſon were of the moſt merciful diſpoſition; and the general reputation they had for this was often the cauſe of tumults and rebellions that would not have had birth in ſeverer reigns.

It was not long after this when there appeared a pretender to the crown, very little expected. He ſaid he was the old king Bacuffa; that he had given it out that he was dead,

dead, for political reaſons, and was come again to claim his crown and kingdom. Never was reſurrection ſo little wiſhed for as this; a violent fear fell upon part of the multitude for ſome time; but his name making no party, whether true or falſe, he was ſeized upon without bloodſhed, tried, and condemned to die. This puniſhment was changed into one of a *ſuppoſed* gentler kind, the cutting off his leg, and ſending him to Wechnè. The operation, always performed in the groſſeſt manner by an ax, high up the leg, and near the knee, is generally fatal; for there is no one, having either ſkill or care, to take up the ends of the veins and arteries ſeparated by the amputation; they only apply uſeleſs ſtiptics and bandages, of no effect, till the patient bleeds to death. This is the common caſe, ſo that the pretended Bacuffa died, in conſequence of the operation, before he came to Wechné, though he was by his ſentence reprieved from death.

The king, now arrived at the ſeventh year of his reign, proclaimed a general hunt, which is a declaration of his near approach to manhood; but he purſued it no length, and again returned to Gondar.

At that time, a great party of the queen's relations was made againſt Ayo governor of Begemder. It began by a competition between Kaſmati Geta the queen's brother, and Ayo, who ſhould have that province. The common voice was for Ayo, not only as a man of the greateſt intereſt in the province, but in all reſpects unexceptionable throughout the kingdom. Welled de l'Oul, (brother to Geta) however, being now Ras and Betwudet, Geta governor of Samen, Euſebius, and all the reſt of them in high places at court,

court, Geta was preferred to the government of Begemder. Ayo, though avowedly a good ſubject of the king, was determined not to be made a ſacrifice to a party. He therefore refuſed to reſign his government, and prepared to defend himſelf.

Upon this, Adero, governor of Gojam, with the whole forces of that province, paſſed the Nile, and entered Begemder; Geta on the ſide of Samen, and laſt of all Welled de l'Oul marched with a royal army to join the forces that had already begun to lay waſte the country, where unuſual exceſſes were committed. Ayo's houſe was burned to the ground, ſo were all thoſe of his party, and their lands deſtroyed, greatly to the general damage of the province and capital. Ayo was now obliged to ſave himſelf by flight. It was ſaid, that the king (though his army was ready) refuſed to march againſt Ayo; but with a party of his own ſet out for Aden, on the frontiers of Sennaar, to hunt there; nor did he return till the executions were over in Begemder.

Adero fell back to Gojam, and Welled de l'Oul to Gondar ſoon after. The king himſelf appeared very much contented with his own expedition, in which he had ſhown great dexterity and bravery, having killed two young elephants, and a gomari, or hippopotamus, with his own hands. Nor did he ſtay any time at Gondar, or make any preferments, the uſual conſequences of victories, but prepared again for another hunting-expedition, or an attack upon the Shangalla. The queen and Welled de l'Oul oppoſed ſtrongly his reſolution. But Yaſous ſeemed to be weary of being governed. He was faſt advancing to manhood, and

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of a diſpoſition rather forward for his age. His expedition againſt the Shangalla was attended with no accident; and he returned to Gondar on the 3d of June, with a number of ſlaves, much better pleaſed that he had neglected, rather than taken, his mother's advice.

It was on the 23d day of December that Yaſous again ſet out on another hunting party, and killed two elephants and a rhinoceros. He then proceeded to Tchelga, and from Tchelga to Waldubba; thence he went to the rivers Gandova and Shimfa. Theſe are two rivers we ſhall have occaſion frequently to ſpeak of in our return through Sennaar, in which kingdom the one is called Dender, the other Rahad. Here he exerciſed himſelf at a very violent ſpecies of hunting, that of forcing the gieratacachin, which means long-tail; it is otherwiſe called giraffa in Arabic. It is the talleſt of beaſts; I never ſaw it dead, nor, I think, more than twice alive, and then at a diſtance. It is, however, often killed by the elephant-hunters. Its ſkin is beautifully variegated when young, but turns brown when arrived at any age. It is, I apprehend, the camelopardalis, and is the only animal, they ſay, that, in ſwiftneſs, will beat a horſe in the fair field.

It was not with a view to hunt only, that Yaſous made theſe frequent excurſions towards the frontiers of Sennaar. His reſolution was formed (as it appeared ſoon after) in imitation of his forefather Socinios, to revive his right over the country of the *Shepherds*, his ancient vaſſals, who, ſince the acceſſion of ſtrength by uniting with the Arabs, had forgot their ancient tribute and ſubjection, as we have already obſerved.

The king in five days marching from Gidara came to a ſtation of the Daveina, which is a tribe of ſhepherds, by much the ſtrongeſt of any in Atbara. He fell into their encampments a little before the dawn of day. The firſt ſhew they made was that of reſiſtance, till they had got their horſes and camels ſaddled; they then all fled, after the king had killed three of them with his own hand. Ras Woodage ſignalized himſelf likewiſe by having ſlain the ſame number with the king. The cattle, women, and proviſions fell all into the king's hand, and were driven off to Gondar. Their arrival gave the town an entertainment to which they had a long time been ſtrangers. Many thouſand camels were aſſembled in the plain, where ſtands the palace of Kahha, (upon a river of that name) large flocks of horned cattle, of extraordinary beauty, were alſo brought from Atbara, which the king ordered to be diſtributed among his ſoldiers, and the prieſts of Gondar, and ſuch of the officers of ſtate as had been neceſſarily detained on account of the police, and had not followed the army.

This year, 1736, there happened a total eclipſe of the ſun which very much affected the minds of the weaker ſort of people. The dreamers and the prophets were everywhere let looſe, full of the lying ſpirit which poſſeſſed them, to foretel that the death of the king, and the downfal of his government were at hand, and deluges of civil blood were then ſpeedily to be ſpilt both in the capital and provinces. There was not, indeed, at the time any circumſtance that warranted ſuch a prediction, or any thing likely to be more fatal to the ſtate, than the expenditure of the large ſums of money that the turn the king had taken ſubjected him to.

He had built a large and very coſtly church at Koſcam, and he was ſtill engaged in a more expenſive work in the building of a palace at Gondar. He was alſo rebuilding his houſe at Riggobee-ber, (the north end of the town) which had been demoliſhed by the rebels; and had begun a very large and expenſive villa at Azazo, with extenſive groves, or gardens, planted thick with orange and lemon trees, upon the banks of a beautiful and clear river which divides the palace from the church of Tecla Haimanout, a large edifice which, ſome time before, he had alſo built and endowed. Beſides all theſe occupations, he was deeply engaged in ornamenting his palace at Gondar. A rebellion, maſſacre, or ſome ſuch misfortune, had happened among the Chriſtians of Smyrna; who, coming to Cairo, and finding that city in a ſtill leſs peaceable ſtate than the one which they had left, they repaired to Jidda in their way to India; but miſſing the monſoon, and being deſtitute of money and neceſſaries, they croſſed over the Red Sea for Maſuah, and came to Gondar. There were twelve of them ſilver-ſmiths, very excellent in that fine work called filligrane, who were all received very readily by the king, liberally furniſhed both with neceſſaries and luxuries, and employed in his palace as their own taſte directed them.

By the hands of theſe, and ſeveral Abyſſinians whom they had taught, ſons of Greek artiſts whoſe fathers were dead, he finiſhed his preſence-chamber in a manner truly admirable. The ſkirting, which in our country is generally of wood, was finiſhed with ivory four feet from the ground. Over this were three rows of mirrors from Venice, all joined together, and fixed in frames of copper, or cornices gilt with gold. The roof, in gaiety and taſte, correſponded per-

fectly with the magnificent finiſhing of the room; it was the work of the Falaſha, and conſiſted of painted cane, ſplit and diſpoſed in Moſaic figures, which produces a gayer effect than it is poſſible to conceive. This chamber, indeed, was never perfectly finiſhed, from a want of mirrors. The king died; taſte decayed; the artiſts were neglected, or employed themſelves in ornamenting ſaddles, bridles, ſwords, and other military ornaments, for which they were very ill paid; part of the mirrors fell down; part remained till my time; and I was preſent when the laſt of them were deſtroyed, on a particular occaſion, after the battle of Serbraxos, as will be hereafter mentioned.

The king had begun another chamber of equal expence, conſiſting of plates of ivory, with ſtars of all colours ſtained in each plate at proper diſtances. This, too, was going to ruin; little had been done in it but the alcove in which he ſat, and little of it was ſeen, as the throne and perſon of the king concealed it.

Yasous was charmed with this multiplicity of works and workmen. He gave up himſelf to it entirely; he even wrought with his own hand, and rejoiced at ſeeing the facility with which, by the uſe of a compaſs and a few ſtraight lines, he could produce the figure of a ſtar equally exact with any of his Greeks. Bounty followed bounty. The beſt villages, and thoſe near the town, were given in property to the Greeks that they might recreate themſelves, but at a diſtance, always liable to his call, and with as little loſs of time as poſſible. He now renounced his favourite hunting-matches and incurſions upon the Shangalla and Shepherds of Atbara.

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The extraordinary manner in which the king employed his time ſoon made him the object of public cenſure. Paſquinades began to be circulated throughout the capital; one in particular, a large roll of parchment, intituled, "The expeditions of *Yaſous the Little*." The king in reality was a man of ſhort ſtature. The Ethiopic word Tannuſh, joined to the king's name Yaſous el Tannuſh, applied both to his ſtature and actions. So Tallac, the name given to another Yaſous, his predeceſſor, ſignified great in capacity and atchievement, as well as that he was of a large and maſculine perſon.

These expeditions, though enumerated in a large ſheet of parchment, were confined to a very few miles; from Gondar to Kahha, from Kahha to Koſcam, from Koſcam, to Azazo, from Azazo to Gondar, from Gondar to Koſcam, from Koſcam to Azazo, and ſo on. It was a ſimilar piece of ridicule upon his father Philip, as we are informed, that, in the laſt century, coſt Don Carlos, prince of Spain, his life.

This ſatire nettled Yaſous exceedingly; and, to wipe off the imputation of inactivity and want of ambition, he prepared for an expedition againſt Sennaar. It was not, however, one of thoſe inroads into Atbara upon the Arabs and Shepherds, whom the Funge had conquered and made tributary to them; but was a regular compaign with a royal army, aimed directly at the very vitals of the monarchy of Sennaar, the capital of the Funge, and at the conqueſt or extirpation of thoſe ſtrangers entirely from Atbara.

We have ſeen, in the courſe of our hiſtory, that theſe two kingdoms, Abyſſinia and Funge, had been on very bad

terms during ſeveral of the laſt reigns; and that perſonal affronts and ſlights had paſſed between the cotemporary princes themſelves. Baady, ſon of L'Oul, who ſucceeded his father in the year 1733, had been diſtinguiſhed by no exploits worthy of a king, but every day had been ſtained with acts of treachery and cruelty unworthy of a man. No intercourſe had paſſed between Yaſous and Baady during their reſpective reigns; there was no war declared, nor peace eſtabliſhed, nor any ſort of treaty ſubſiſting between them.

Yasous, without any previous declaration, and without any provocation, at leaſt as far as is known, raiſed a very numerous and formidable army, and gave the command of it to Ras Welled de l'Oul; and Kaſmati Waragna was appointed his Fit-Auraris. The king commanded a choſen body of troops, ſeparate from the reſt of the army, which was to act as a reſerve, or as occaſion ſhould require, in the pitched battle. This he ardently wiſhed for, and had figured to himſelf that he was to fight againſt Baady in perſon. Yaſous, from the moment he entered the territory of Sennaar, gave his ſoldiers the accuſtomed licence he always had indulged them with, when marching through an enemy's country. He knew not, in theſe circumſtances, what was meant by mercy; all that had the breath of life was ſacrificed by the ſword, and the fire conſumed the reſt.

An univerſal terror ſpread around him down to the heart of Atbara. The Shepherds and Arabs, as many as could fly, diſperſed themſelves in the woods, which, all the way from the frontiers of Abyſſinia to the river Dender, are very thick, and in ſome places almoſt impenetrable. Some of the Arabs,

Arabs, either from affection or fear, joined Yaſous in his march; among theſe was Nile Wed Ageeb, prince of the Arabs; others taking courage, gathered, and made a ſtand at the Dender, to try their fortune, and give their cattle time to paſs the Nile, and then, if defeated, they were to follow them. Kaſmati Waragna, (as Fit-Auraris) joined by the king, no ſooner came up with theſe Arabs on the banks of the Dender, than he fell furiouſly upon them, broke and diſperſed them with a conſiderable ſlaughter; then leaving Ras Welled de l'Oul with the king, and the main body to encamp, taking advantage of the confuſion the defeat of the Arabs had occaſioned, he advanced by a forced march to the Nile, to take a view of the town of Sennaar.

Baady had aſſembled a very large army on the other ſide of the river, and was preparing to march out of Sennaar; but, terrified at the king's approach, the defeat of the Arabs, and the velocity with which the Abyſſinians advanced, he was about to change his reſolution, abandon Sennaar, and retire north into Atbara.

There is a ſmall kingdom, or principality, called Dar Fowr, all inhabited by negroes, far in the deſert weſt of Sennaar, joining with two other petty negro ſtates like itſelf, ſtill farther weſtward, called Selé and Bagirma, while to the eaſtward it joins with Kordofan, formerly a province of Dar Fowr, but conquered from it by the Funge.

Hamis, prince of Dar Fowr, had been baniſhed from his country in a late revolution occaſioned by an unſucceſsful war againſt Selé and Bagirma, and had fled to Sennaar, where he had been received kindly by Baady, and it was by his

his aſſiſtance the Funge had ſubdued Kordofan. This prince, a gallant ſoldier, could not bruik to ſee the green ſtandard of his prophet Mahomet flying before an army of Chriſtians; and, being informed of the king's march and ſeparation from the main body nearly as ſoon as it happened, he propoſed to Baady, that, as an allurement to Yaſous to paſs the river with only the troops he had with him, he ſhould do from prudence what he reſolved to do from fear, and fall back behind Sennaar, leaving it to Yaſous to enter; but, in the mean time, that, he ſhould diſpatch him with 4000 of his beſt horſe, armed with coats of mail, to paſs the Nile at a known place below, on the right of Welled de l'Oul, on whom he ſhould fall by ſurpriſe, and, if lucky enough to defeat him, as was probable, he would then cloſe upon Yaſous's rear, which would of neceſſity either oblige him to ſurrender, or loſe his life and army in attempting to repaſs the river between the two Nubian armies. This counſel, for many reaſons was perfectly agreeable to Baady, who inſtantly fell back from covering Sennaar, and then detached Hamis to make a circuit out of ſight, and croſs the Nile as propoſed.

In the mean time, Yaſous advanced to Baſboch, where he found the current too rapid, and the river too deep for his infantry. He diſpatched, therefore, a meſſenger to Welled de l'Oul for a reinforcement of horſe, and gave his infantry orders to retire to the main body upon the arrival of the reinforcement of cavalry. This reſolution he had taken upon advancing higher up the river from Baſboch, till oppoſite to the town of Sennaar, and when divided only from it by the Nile. He there ſaw the confuſion that reigned in that large town. No preparation for reſiſtance being

viſible, the cries of women at the ſight of an enemy ſo near them, and the hurry of the men deſerting their habitation loaded with the moſt valuable of their effects, all increaſed the king's impatience to put himſelf in poſſeſſion of this capital of his enemy.

It happened that an Arab, belonging to Nile Wed Ageeb, had ſeen the manœuvre of Hamis and his cavalry. This man, croſſing the Nile at the neareſt ford, came and told his maſter, Wed Ageeb, what he had ſeen, who informed the king of his danger. Upon interrogating the Arab, it was found that the affair of Welled de l'Oul would certainly be over before the king could poſſibly join him; and in that caſe he muſt fall in the midſt of a victorious army, and his deſtruction muſt then be inevitable, if he attempted it. It was, therefore, agreed, as the only means poſſible to ſave the king and that part of the army he had with him, to retreat in the route Shekh Nile ſhould indicate to them, marching up with the river Nile cloſe on their right hand, and leaving the deſert between that and the Dender, which is abſolutely without water, to cover their left. This was executed as ſoon as reſolved.

In the mean time, Hamis had croſſed the Nile, and continued his march with the utmoſt diligence, and, in the cloſe of the evening, had fallen upon Welled de l'Oul as unexpectedly as he could have wiſhed. The Abyſſinians were everywhere ſlaughtered and trodden down before they could prepare themſelves for the leaſt reſiſtance. All that could fly ſheltered themſelves in the woods: but this refuge was as certain death as the ſword of the Funge; for, after leaving the river Dender, all the country behind them

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was perfectly deſtitute of water. Ras Welled de l'Oul, and ſome other principal officers, under the direction of ſome faithful Arabs, eſcaped, and, with much difficulty, two days after, joined the king.

Besides theſe, the army, conſiſting of 18,000 men, either periſhed by the ſword, by thirſt, or were taken priſoners; all the ſacred reliques, which the Abyſſinians carry about with their armies to enſure victory, and avert misfortune; the picture of the crown of thorns, called *ſele quarat raſou*; pieces of the true croſs; a crucifix that had on many occaſions ſpoke, (which ſhould ever after be dumb ſince it ſpoke not that day); all theſe treaſures of prieſtcraft were taken by the Funge, and carried in triumph to Sennaar. Great part of thoſe Arabs, who had joined the king in his march northward, had now quitted him and attached themſelves to the purſuit of the fugitive remains of Welled de l'Oul's army. As theſe Arabs were thoſe that lived neareſt the Abyſſinian frontier, and to whom the king had done no harm, becauſe they had moſtly joined him, no ſooner was he informed of their treachery, but juſt arrived in their country, and ſcarcely out of danger from the purſuit of the Funge, Yaſous turned ſhort to the left, deſtroying with fire and ſword all the families of thoſe that had forſaken him, and ſo continued to do till arrived on the banks of the Tacazzé.

The Arabs and Shepherds there, many of whom had juſt returned from the deſtruction of Welled de l'Oul's army at Sennaar, and were now rejoicing their families with the news of ſo complete a victory, and that all danger from the Chriſtian army was over, were aſtoniſhed to ſee Yaſous at the head of a freſh and vigorous army, burning and de-

ſtroying their country, and committing all ſort of devaſtation, when they thought him long ago dead, or fugitive, and ſkulking half-famiſhed on the banks of the Dender.

The king returned in this manner to Gondar, carrying more the appearance of a conqueror than one who had ſuffered the loſs of a whole army, his ſoldiers being loaded with the ſpoils of the Arabs, and multitudes of cattle driven before them. It was but too viſible, however, by the countenances of many, how wide a difference there was between the loſs and the acquiſition.

It was, indeed, not from the preſence or behaviour of the king, nor yet from his diſcourſe, that it could be learned any ſuch misfortune had befallen him. On the contrary, he affected greater gaiety than uſual, when talking of the expedition; and ſaid publicly, and laughing, one day, as he aroſe from council, "Let all thoſe who were not pleaſed with the ſong of Koſcam ſing that of Sennaar." From this many were of opinion, that he enjoyed a kind of malevolent pleaſure from the misfortune which had befallen his army, who, not content with ſeeing him cultivate and enjoy the arts of peace, had urged him to undertake a war of which there was no need, and for which there was no provocation given, though in it there was every ſort of danger to be expected.

Although Yaſous gave no conſolation to his people, the prieſts and fanatics ſoon endeavoured to prepare them one. Tenſa Mammo arrived from Sennaar with the crown of thorns, the true croſs, and all the reſt of that precious merchandiſe, ſafe and entire, only a little profaned by the bloody

hands of the Moors. Ras Welled de l'Oul's army, conſiſting of 18,000 of their fellow-citizens, was lying dead upon the Dender. It was no matter; they had got the ſpeaking crucifix, but had paid 8000 ounces of gold for it. Still it was no matter; they had got the crown of thorns. The prieſts made proceſſions from church to church, ſinging hallelujahs and ſongs of thankſgiving, when they ſhould have been in ſackcloth and aſhes, upon their knees deprecating any further chaſtiſement upon their pride, cruelty, and profaneneſs. All Gondar was drunk with joy; and Yaſous himſelf was aſtoniſhed to ſee them ſinging the ſong of Sennaar much more willingly than that of Koſcam.

At this time died Abuna Chriſtodulus; and it was cuſtomary for the king to advance the money to defray the expence of bringing a ſucceſſor. But Yaſous's money was all gone to Venice for mirrors; and, to defray the expence of bringing a new Abuna, as well as of redeeming of the ſacred reliques, he laid a ſmall tax upon the churches, ſaying merrily, "that the Abuna and the croſſes were to be maintained, and repaired by the public; but it was incumbent upon the church to purchaſe new ones when they were worn out."

Theodorus, prieſt of Debra Selalo, Likianos of Azazo, and Georgis called Kipti, were conſigned to the care of three Mahometan merchants and brokers at court, whoſe names were Hamet Ali, Abdulla, and Abdelcader, to go to Cairo and fetch a ſucceſſor for Chriſtodulus. They arrived at Hamazen on April 29th 1743, where the Mahometan guides choſe rather to paſs the winter-ſeaſon than at Maſuah, as at that place they were apprehenſive they would ſuffer extortions

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and ill-uſage of every ſort. We know not what came of Georgis Kipti; but, as ſoon as the rainy ſeaſon was over, Theodorus and Likianos came ſtraight to Maſuah.

As ſoon as the Naybe got the whole convoy of prieſts and Mahometans into his hands, he demanded of them half of the money the king had given them to defray the expences of fetching the Abuna. He pretended alſo, that both Mahometans and Chriſtians ſhould have paſſed the rainy ſeaſon at Maſuah. He declared that this was his perquiſite, and that he had prepared great and exquiſite proviſions for them, which, being ſpoiled and become uſeleſs, it was but reaſonable they ſhould pay as if they had conſumed them: till this was ſettled, he declared that none of them ſhould embark or ſtir one ſtep from Maſuah.

The news of this detention ſoon arrived at Gondar; and Yaſous gave orders that Michael Suhul, governor of Tigrè, (afterwards Ras) and the Baharnagaſh, ſhould with an army blockade Maſuah, ſo as to ſtarve the Naybe into a more reaſonable behaviour. But, before this could be executed, the Naybe had called the prieſts before him, and declared, if they did not ſurrender the money that inſtant, he would put them to death; and, in place of giving them time to reſolve, he gave them a very plain hint to obey, by ordering the executioner to ſtrike off the heads of two criminals condemned for other crimes, after having brought them into their preſence. The poor wretches, Theodorus and Likianos, did not reſemble Portugueſe, who would have braved theſe threats in the purſuit of martyrdom. The ſight of blood was the moſt convincing of all arguments the Naybe could uſe. They gave up the money, leaving the diviſion of it to his own diſ-

cretion. He then hurried them on board a veſſel, giving Michael and the Baharnagaſh notice that they were gone in ſafety, and that he had obeyed the king's orders in all reſpects. Michael was at that time in the ſtricteſt friendſhip with the Naybe, who was his principal inſtrument in collecting fire-arms in Arabia to ſtrengthen him in the quarrel he was then meditating againſt his ſovereign.

On the 8th of February 1744 the prieſts and their guides ſailed from Maſuah; and they did not arrive at Jidda till the 14th of April. There they found that the ſhips for Cairo were gone, and that they had loſt the monſoon; and, as no misfortune comes ſingle, the Sherriffe of Mecca made a demand upon them for as much money as they had paid the Naybe; and, upon refuſal, he put Abdelcader in priſon, nor was he releaſed for a twelvemonth after, when the money was ſent from Abyſſinia; and it was then agreed, that 75 ounces of gold* ſhould in all future times be paid for leave of paſſage to thoſe who went to Cairo to fetch the Abuna; and 90 ounces a-piece to the Sherriffe, and to the Naybe, for allowing him to paſs when choſen, and furniſhing him with neceſſaries during his ſtay in their reſpective government; and this is the agreement that ſubſiſts to this day.

In this interim, Likianos of Azazo, one of the prieſts, weary of the journey and of his religion, and having quarrelled with Abdulla, renounced the Chriſtian faith, and embraced that of Mahomet; and Theodorus, Abdulla, and Hamet Ali, being the only three remaining, hired a veſſel at Jidda to carry them to the port of Suez, the bottom of the Arabic

*About one hundred and eighty-ſix pounds, an ounce of gold at a medium being 10 crowns.

Arabic Gulf. Before they had been a month at ſea, Abdulla died, as did Hamet Ali ſeven days after they arrived at Suez. They had been on ſea three months and ſix days from Jidda to that port, becauſe they ſailed againſt the monſoon.

It was the 25th of June that Theodorus arrived at Cairo, delivered the king's preſent, the account of the Abuna's death, and the king's deſire of having ſpeedily a ſucceſſor. The patriarch, having called together all his biſhops, prieſts, and deacons, conferred the dignity on a monk of the Order of St Anthony, the only Order of monks the Coptic church acknowledges. Theſe paſs a very auſtere life in two convents in a dreary deſert, never taſting fleſh, but living on olives, ſalt ſardines*, wild herbs, and the worſt of vegetables. Yet ſo attached are they to this ſolitude, that, when they are called to be ordained to this prelature of Abyſſinia, a warrant from the baſha, and a party of Turks, is neceſſary to bring this elect one to Cairo in chains, where he is kept in priſon till he is ordained; guarded afterwards, and then forced on board a veſſel which carries him to Abyſſinia, whence he is certain never to return.

The Abuna departed from Suez the 20th of September; the beginning of November he arrived at Jidda; in February 1745 he ſailed from Jidda, taking with him Abdelcader, now freed from priſon; he arrived at Maſuah the 7th of March, and immediately ſent an expreſs to notify his arrival to the king and queen, and to Ras Welled de l'Oul. Congratulations

* This is a fiſh common in the Mediterranean, of the kind of anchovies, the common food of the galley-ſlaves, and lower ſort of people.

gratulations upon the event were returned from each of them; they requeſted he would immediately come to court; but this the Naybe refuſed to permit, till he had firſt received his dues; and Yaſous ſeemed inclined to pay no more for him than what he had coſt already.

The prieſts, and devout people in Tigré, were very deſirous to free the Abuna from his confinement in Maſuah. They ſaw that the king was not inclined to advance money, and all of them knew perfectly, that, whatever face he put upon the matter, the Ras would not give an ounce of gold to prevent the Abuna from ſtaying there all his life. In this exigency they applied to Janni, a Greek, living at Adowa, (of whom I ſhall hereafter ſpeak), a confidential ſervant and favourite of Michael, and alſo well acquainted at Maſuah, to ſee if he could get him releaſed by ſtratagem. Janni concerted the affair with the monks of the monaſtery of Bizan, two of whom conducted the Abuna by night out of the iſland of Maſuah, and landed him ſafely in their monaſtery in the wilderneſs, with the *myron*, or conſecrated oil, in one hand, and his miſſal, or liturgy, in the other. So far the eſcape was complete; but unluckily no orders had been given for Theodorus, who accordingly remained behind at Maſuah.

The Naybe, exaſperated at the Abuna's flight, wrecked his vengeance on poor Theodorus; he put him in irons, and threw him into cloſe priſon, where he remained for two months. There was no remedy but paying 80 ounces of gold to the Naybe for his releaſe; he might elſe have remained there for ever.

The king, not a little ſurpriſed at theſe frequent inſolences on the part of the Naybe, began to inquire what could be the reaſon; for he perfectly knew, not only Suhul Michael, the governor of Tigrè, but even the Baharnagaſh, could reduce Maſuah to nothing with their little finger; and he was informed, that a ſtrong friendſhip ſubſiſted between the Naybe and Suhul Michael, and that it was by relying on his friendſhip that the Naybe adventured to treat the king's ſervants, at different times, in the manner he had done.

Yasous, deſirous to verify this himſelf, and to diſſolve the bands of ſo unnatural a friendſhip, marched into Tigrè with a conſiderable army. Paſſing by Adowa, the reſidence of Suhul Michael, he was pleaſed with the warlike appearance of this his ſeat of government, and the perfect order and ſubordination that reigned there. Certain diſorders and tumults were ſaid to prevail in the neighbouring province of Enderta where Kaſmati Woldo commanded. The ſavage people, called Azabo, living at Azab, the low country below Enderta and the Dobas, (a nation of *Shepherds* near them, ſtill more ſavage, if poſſible, than them) had laid waſte the diſtricts that were next to their frontier, burning the churches, and ſlaying the prieſts in the daily inroads which they made into Abyſſinia. All theſe things, bad enough indeed, were at this time aggravated, as was thought, for two reaſons; the firſt was to caſt an odium upon Kaſmati Woldo, Michael's great enemy, as incapable of governing his province; the ſecond, to prevent the king in his progreſs to Maſuah, as he openly profeſſed his fixed intention was to puniſh the Naybe with the utmoſt ſeverity.

The

The protection of his ſubjects, therefore, from the ſavages, was repreſented to the king as the moſt preſſing ſervice; and, marching with his uſual diligence ſtraight to Enderta, he was met there by Kaſmati Woldo, an old experienced officer, who aiming at no preferment, paying his tribute punctually, and having been conſtantly occupied in repelling the incurſions of the Pagans on the frontier, had not been at court ſince the reign of Theophilus.

After receiving the neceſſary information about the country he intended to enter, and taking Kaſmati Woldo's two ſons with him, the king deſcended into the low country of Dancali, once a petty Mahometan kingdom, and friendly to Abyſſinia, now a mixture of Galla and the natives called Taltal. Without delay he puſhed on to Azab, ſpreading deſolation through that little province, always deſert enough from its nature, though formerly, from its trade, one of the richeſt ſpots in the world.

The king then turned to the right upon the Dobas, who, not expecting an army of that ſtrength, fled and left their whole cattle a prey to Yaſous and his ſoldiers; a greater number was ſcarce ever ſeen in Abyſſinia. The king now returned to Enderta, where he confirmed Kaſmati Woldo in his government with diſtinguiſhed marks of favour; and he this year again came back victorious to Gondar, leaving his campaign againſt the Naybe for another ſeaſon.

In paſſing by Adowa, a fray happened among the king's troops and thoſe of Michael; ſeveral were killed on both ſides; and, as the diſpute was between Tigrè and Amhara, the two great diviſions of the country, it threatened to create

a party-quarrel between the ſoldiers of one diviſion and thoſe of the other. No notice was taken of this when Yaſous marched eaſtward; but, on his return, Michael begged the king to interfere, and make peace between the two parties. To this Yaſous anſwered, That he did not think it worth his while, for they would make peace themſelves when they were tired of quarrelling.

Whether this was the motive of ſending for Michael to Gondar, or whether it was the ſtory of the Naybe, or what elſe was the king's motive, we do not know; but, ſo ſoon as he was arrived in the capital, he ſent Kaſmati Ephraim, and Shalaka Kefla, into Tigré, commanding Michael's attendance at Gondar. This Michael abſolutely refuſed; he pretended Kaſmati Woldo had eſtranged the king's affection from him, and that Yaſous had called him to Gondar now to put him to death, upon a pretence of his ſoldiers quarrel with the king's troops. This refuſal was repeated to Yaſous, without any palliation whatever; and he inſtantly marched from Gondar, and encamped upon the river Waar, where he was reinforced a few days afterwards by Ras Welled de l'Oul, whoſe intention was to perſuade Michael to ſubmiſſion; for he had been adviſed not to truſt the king's oath of forgiveneſs unleſs he had likewiſe that of Welled de l'Oul.

The king's readineſs diſconcerted Suhul Michael. Tho' well armed and appointed himſelf, as alſo an excellent general, he did not riſk the preſenting himſelf againſt the king on a plain; for Yaſous was much beloved by the ſoldiers, and always very kind and liberal to them.

THE mountain Samayat, though not the moſt inacceſſible in Tigrè, was a place of great conſequence and ſtrength, when poſſeſſed by an army and officer ſuch as Michael. To this natural fortreſs he carried all his valuable effects, occupied and obſtructed all the avenues to it, and reſolved there to abide his fortune. The king, with his army, ſat down at the foot of the mountain; and, encircling it with troops, he ordered it to to be aſſaulted on four ſides at once; on one, by Kaſmati Ayo, governor of Begemder; on the ſecond, by Kaſmati Waragna; the third, by Kaſmati Woldo; and the fourth, by Ras Welled de l'Oul. The king himſelf went round about to every place, giving his orders, encouraging his men, and fighting himſelf in the foremoſt ranks like a common ſoldier. The mountain was at length carried, with much bloodſhed on both ſides, and Michael was beat from every part of it but one, which, though not ſtrong enough to hold out againſt the king's army, if well defended could not be carried without great loſs of men.

HERE Michael deſired to capitulate. But, before he left the mountain and ſurrendered to the king, he deſired that an officer of truſt might be ſent to him, becauſe he had then upon the mountain a large collection of treaſure, which he deſired to keep for the king's uſe, otherwiſe it would be diſſipated and loſt in the hands of the common ſoldiers. The Ras ſent two confidential officers, who took from the hands of Michael a prodigious ſum of gold, the preciſe amount of which is not named. He then deſcended the mountain, carrying, as is the cuſtom of the country for vanquiſhed rebels, a ſtone upon his head, as confeſſing himſelf guilty of a capital crime. A violent ſtorm of rain and wind prevented, for that day, his coming into the pre-

ſence of the king; and the devil, as the Abyſſinians believe, began in that ſtorm a correſpondence with him which continued many years; I myſelf have often heard him vaunt of his having maintained, ever ſince that time, an intercourſe with St Michael the archangel.

On the morning of the 27th of December, Ras Welled de l'Oul ordered Michael to attend him in the habit of a penitent; and, followed by his companions in misfortune, (that part of his troops which was taken on the mountain) and ſurrounded by a number of ſoldiers, with drums beating and colours flying, he was carried into the king's preſence.

Ras Welled de l'Oul had, with difficulty, engaged the king's promiſe that he was not to put him to death. The good genius of Yaſous and his family was labouring by one laſt effort to ſave him. On ſeeing Michael upon the ground, Yaſous fell into a violent tranſport of rage, ſpurned him with his foot, declaring he retracted his promiſe, and ordered him to be carried out, and put to death before the door of his tent. Ras Welled de l'Oul, Kaſmati Waragna, Kaſmati Woldo, and all the officers of conſideration, either of the court or army, now fell with their faces upon the ground, crying to the king for mercy and forgiveneſs. Yaſous, if in his heart he did not relent, ſtill was obliged to pardon on ſuch univerſal ſolicitation; and this he did, after making the following obſervation, which ſoon after was looked on as a prophecy: "I have pardoned that traitor at your inſtance, becauſe I at all times reward merit more willingly than I puniſh crimes; but I call you all to witneſs, that I waſh my hands before God to-day of all that innocent blood Michael ſhall

ſhed before he brings about the deſtruction of his country, which I know in his heart he has been long meditating."

I CANNOT help mentioning it as an extraordinary circumſtance, that at the time I was at Gondar, in the very height of Suhul Michael's tyranny, a man quarrelled with another who was a ſcribe, and accuſed him before Michael of having recorded this ſpeech of the king, as I have now ſtated it, in a hiſtory that he had written of Yaſous's reign. The book was produced, the paſſage was found and read; and I certainly expected to have ſeen it torn to pieces, or hung upon a tree about the author's neck. On the contrary, all the Ras ſaid was, "If what he writes is true, wherein is the man to blame?" And turning with a grin to Tecla Haimanout, one of the judges, he ſaid, "Do you remember? I do "believe Yaſous did ſay ſo." The book was reſtored to the author, and no more ſaid of the matter, not even an order was given to eraſe the paſſage. He had no objection to Yaſous and to his whole race being prophets; he had only taken a reſolution that they ſhould not be kings.

A GENERAL ſilence followed this ſpeech of Yaſous, inſtead of the acclamations of joy uſual in ſuch caſes. The king then ordered Ras Welled de l'Oul to lead the army on to Gondar, which he did with great pomp and military parade, while the king, who could not forget his forebodings, retired to an iſland, there to faſt ſome days in conſequence of a vow that he had made. This being finiſhed, Yaſous returned to Gondar; and, as he was now in perfect peace throughout his kingdom, he began again to decorate the apartments of his palace. A large number of mirrors had arrived at

this time, a preſent from the Naybe of Maſuah, who, after what had happened to his friend Michael, began to feel a little uneaſy about the fate of his iſland.

While Yaſous was thus employed, news were ſent him from Kaſmati Ayo, governor of Begemder, that he had beat the people of Laſta in a pitched battle in their own country, had forced their ſtrong-holds, diſperſed their troops, and received the general ſubmiſſion of the province, which had been in rebellion ſince the time of Hatzè Socinios, that is, above 100 years. Immediately after theſe news, came Ayo himſelf to parade and throw his *unclean* trophies of victory before the king, and brought with him many of the principal people of Laſta to take the oaths of allegiance to the king.

Yasous received the accounts of the ſucceſs with great pleaſure, and ſtill more ſo the oaths and ſubmiſſions made to him. He then added Laſta to the province of Begemder, and cloathed Ayo magnificently, as well as all thoſe noblemen that came with him from Laſta. The end of this year was not marked with good fortune like the beginning. A plague of locuſts fell upon the country, and conſumed every green thing, ſo that a famine ſeemed to be inevitable, becauſe, contrary to their cuſtom, they had attached themſelves chiefly to the grain. This plague is not ſo frequent in Abyſſinia as the Jeſuits have reported it to be. Theſe good fathers indeed bring the locuſts upon the country, that, by their pretended miracles, they may chace them away.

Michael had continued ſome time in priſon, in the cuſtody of Ras Welled de l'Oul. But he was afterwards ſet at

full

full liberty; and it was now the 17th year of Yaſous's reign, when, on the 17th of September 1746, at a great promotion of officers of ſtate, Michael, by the nomination of the king himſelf, was reſtored to his government of Tigrè; and, a few days after, he returned to that province. All his ancient friends and troops flocked to him as ſoon as he appeared, to welcome him upon an event looked upon by all as nearly miraculous. Nor did Michael diſcourage that idea himſelf, but gave it to be underſtood, among his moſt intimate friends, that a viſion had aſſured him that he was thenceforward under the immediate protection of St Michael the archangel, with whom he was to conſult on every emergency.

As ſoon as he had got a ſufficient army together, the firſt thing he did was to attack Kaſmati Woldo, without any provocation whatever; and, after beating him in two battles, he drove him from his province, and forced him to take refuge among the Galla, where, ſoon after, by employing ſmall preſents, he procured him to be murdered; the ordinary fate of thoſe who ſeek protection among thoſe faithleſs barbarians.

It will ſeem extraordinary that the king, who had ſuch recent experience of both, the one diſtinguiſhed for his duty, the other for his obſtinate rebellion, ſhould yet tamely ſuffer his old and faithful ſervant to fall before a man whom in his heart he ſo much miſtruſted. But the truth is, all Michael's danger was paſt the moment he got free acceſs to the king and queen, though he was deſervedly eſteemed to be the ableſt ſoldier in Abyſſinia of his time, he was infinitely more capable in intrigues, and private negociations at

at court, than he was in the field, being a pleaſant and agreeable ſpeaker in common converſation; a powerful and copious orator at council; his language, whether Amharic or Tigrè, (but above all the latter) correct and elegant above any man's at court; ſteady to the meaſures he adopted, but often appearing to give them up eaſily, and without paſſion, when he ſaw, by the circumſtances of the times, he could not prevail: though violent in the purſuit of riches, when in his own province, where he ſpared no means nor man to procure them, no ſooner had he come to Gondar than he was laviſh of his money to extreme; and indeed he ſet no value upon it farther than as it ſerved to corrupt men to his ends.

When he ſurrendered his treaſure at the mountain Samayat, he is ſaid to have divided it into ſeveral parcels with his own hand. The greateſt ſhare fell to the king, who thought he had got the whole; but the officers who received it, and ſaw different quantities deſtined for the Iteghé and Ras Welled de l'Oul, took care to convey them their ſhare, for fear of making powerful enemies. Kaſmati Waragna had his part; and even Kaſmati Woldo, though Michael ſoon after plundered and ſlew him. All Gondar were his friends, becauſe all that capital was bribed on this occaſion. It was gold he only lent them, to reſume it, (as he afterwards did) with great intereſt, at a proper time.

It ſtill remained in the king's breaſt to wipe off his defeat at Sennaar, as he had, upon every other occaſion, been victorious; and even in this, he ſtill flattered himſelf he had not been beat in perſon. He ſet out again upon another expedition to Atbara; inſtead of coaſting along the Dender, he

he deſcended along the Tacazzé into Atbara, where, finding no reſiſtance among the Shepherds, he attached himſelf in particular to the tribe called Daveina, which, in the former expedition, had joined Welled de l'Oul's army. Upon the firſt news of his approach they had ſubmitted; but, notwithſtanding all promiſes and pretences of peace, he fell upon them unawares, and almoſt extirpated the tribe.

Suhul Michael, while the king was thus occupied in the frontier of his province, did every thing that a faithful, active ſubject could do. He furniſhed him conſtantly with the beſt intelligence, ſupplied him with the proviſions he wanted, and made, from time to time, ſtrong detachments of troops to reinforce him, and to ſecure ſuch poſts as were moſt commodious and important in caſe of a retreat becoming neceſſary.

Yasous, who had ſucceeded to his wiſh, was fully ſenſible of the value of ſuch ſervices, and ſent, therefore, for Michael, commanding his attendance at Gondar. There was no fear, no heſitation now, as before in the affair of Samayat. He decamped upon the firſt notice, even before the rainy ſeaſon was over, and arrived at Gondar on Auguſt 30th 1747, bringing with him plenty of gold; few ſoldiers, indeed, but thoſe picked men, and in better order, than the king had ever yet ſeen troops.

It was plain now to everybody, that nothing could ſtop Michael's growing fortune. He alone ſeemed not ſenſible of this. He was humbler and leſs aſſuming than before. Thoſe whom he had firſt bribed he continued ſtill to bribe, and added as many new friends to that liſt as he thought could

could ſerve him. He pretended to no precedency or pre-eminence at court, not even ſuch as was due to the rank of his place, but behaved as a ſtranger that had no fixed abode among them.

One day, dining with Kaſmati Geta, the queen's brother, who was governor of Samen, and drinking out of a common-glaſs decanter called Brulhé, when it is the privilege and cuſtom of the governor of Tigré to uſe a gold cup, being aſked, Why he did not claim his privilege? he ſaid, All the gold he had was in heaven, alluding to the name of the mountain Samayat, where his gold was ſurrendered, which word ſignifies Heaven. The king, who liked this kind of jeſts, of which Michael was full, on hearing this, ſent him a gold cup, with a note written and placed within it, "Happy are they who place their riches in heaven;" which Michael directed immediately to be engraved by one of the Greeks upon the cup itſelf. What became of it I know not; I often wiſhed to have found it out, and purchaſed it. I ſaw it the firſt day he dined, after coming from council, at his return from Tigré, after the execution of Abba Salama; but I never obſerved it at Serbraxos, nor ſince. I heard, indeed, a Greek ſay he had ſent it by Ozoro Eſther, as a preſent to a church of St Michael in Tigré.

Enderta was now given him in addition to the province of Tigré, and, ſoon after, Siré and all the provinces between the Tacazzé and the Red Sea; ſo he was now maſter of near half of Abyſſinia.

The reſt of this king's reign was ſpent at home in his uſual amuſements and occupations. Several ſmall expedi-

tions were made by his command, under Palambaras Selaſſé, and other officers, to harraſs the Shepherds, whom he conquered almoſt down to Suakem. His ravages, however, had been confined to the peninſula of Atbara, and had not ever paſſed to the eaſtward of the Tacazzé, but he had impoveriſhed all that country. After this, by his orders, the Baharnagaſh, and other officers, entered that diviſion called Derkin, between the Mareb and the Atbara, and, ſtill further, between the Mareb and the mountains, in a part of it called Ajam. In this country Haſſine Wed Ageeb was defeated by the Baharnagaſh with great ſlaughter; and the Shekh of Jibbel Muſa, one of the moſt powerful of the Shepherds, was taken priſoner by Palambaras Selaſſé, without reſiſtance, and carried, with his wife, his family, and cattle, in triumph to Gondar, where, having ſworn allegiance to the king, he was kindly treated, and ſent home with preſents, and every thing that had been taken from him.

This year, being the 24th of Yaſous's reign, he was taken ill, and died on the 21ſt day of June 1753, after a very ſhort illneſs. As he was but a young man, and of a ſtrong conſtitution, there was ſome ſuſpicion he died by poiſon given him by the queen's relations, who were deſirous to ſecure another minority rather than ſerve under a king, who, by every action, ſhewed he was no longer to be led or governed by any, but leaſt of all by them.

Yasous was married very young to a lady of noble family in Amhara, by whom he had two ſons, Adigo and Aylo. But their mother pretending to a ſhare of her huſband's government, and to introduce her friends at court, ſo hurt Welleta Georgis the Ieghé, or queen-regent, that ſhe prevailed

vailed on the king to baniſh both the mother and ſons to the mountain of Wechné.

In order to prevent ſuch interference for the future, the Iteghé took a ſtep, the like of which had never before been attempted in Abyſſinia. It was to bring a wife to Yaſous from a race of Galla. Her name was Wobit, daughter of Amitzo, to whom Bacuffa had once fled when he eſcaped from the mountain before he was king, and had been kindly entertained there. Her family was of the tribe of Edjow, and the diviſion of Toluma, that is, of the ſouthern Galla upon the frontiers of Amhara. They were eſteemed the politeſt, that is, the leaſt barbarous of the name. But it was no matter, they were Galla, and that was enough. Between them and Abyſſinia, oceans of blood had been ſhed, and ſtrong prejudices imbibed againſt them, never to be effaced by marriages. She was, however, brought to Gondar, chriſtened by the name of Beſſabée, and married to Yaſous: By her he had a ſon, named Joas, who ſucceeded his father.

JOAS.

From 1753 to 1768.

This Prince a Favourer of the Galla his Relations—Great Diſſentions on bringing them to Court—War of Begemder—Ras Michael brought to Gondar—Defeats Ayo—Mariam Barea refuſes to be acceſſary to his Death—King favours Waragna Faſil—Battle of Azazo—King Aſſaſſinated in his Palace.

UPON the firſt news of the death of king Yaſous, the old officers and ſervants of the crown, remembering the tumults and confuſion that happened in Gondar at his acceſſion, repaired to the palace from their different governments, each with a ſmall well-regulated body of troops, ſufficient to keep order, and ſtrengthen the hands of Ras Welled de l'Oul, whom they all looked upon as the father of his country. The firſt who arrived was Kaſmati Waragna of Damot; then Ayo of Begemder, and very ſoon after, though at much the greateſt diſtance, Suhul Michael, governor of Tigrè. Theſe three entered the palace, with Welled

de l'Oul at their head, and received the young king Joas from the hands of the Iteghé his grandmother, and proclaimed him king, with the uſual formalities, without any oppoſition or tumult whatever.

A NUMBER of promotions immediately followed; but it was obſerved with great diſcontent by many, that the Iteghé's family and relations were grown now ſo numerous, that they were ſufficient to occupy all the great offices of ſtate without the participation of any of the old families, which were the ſtrength of the crown in former reigns; and that now no preferment was to be expected unleſs through ſome relation to the queen-mother.

WELLED HAWARAYAT, ſon to Michael governor of Tigré, had married Ozoro Altaſh, the queen's third daughter, almoſt a child; and long before that, Netcho of Tcherkin had married Ozoro Eſther, likewiſe very young; and Ras Michael, old as he was, had made known his pretenſions to Ozoro Welleta Iſrael, the queen's ſecond daughter, immediately younger than Ozoro Eſther. Theſe propoſals, from an old man, had been received with great contempt and deriſion by Welleta Iſrael, and ſhe perſevered ſo long in the deriſion of Michael's courtſhip, that it left ſtrong impreſſions on the hard heart of that old warrior, which ſhewed themſelves after in very diſagreeable conſequences to that lady all the time Michael was in power.

THE firſt that broke the peace of this new reign was Nanna Georgis, chief of one of the clans of Agows of Damot. Engaged in old feuds with the Galla on the other ſide of the Nile, the natural enemies of his country, he could

not

not ſee, but with great diſpleaſure, a Galla ſuch as Kaſmati Waragna, however worthy, governor of Damot, and capable, therefore, of over-running the whole province in a moment, by calling his Pagan countrymen from the other ſide.

Waragna, though this was in his power, knew the meaſure was unpopular. Kaſmati Eſhté was the queen's brother, and governor of Ibaba, a royal reſidence, which has a large territory and ſalary annexed to it. When, therefore, at council, he had complained of the injury done to him by Nanna Georgis, he refuſed the taking upon him the redreſſing theſe injuries, and puniſhing the Agows, unleſs Kaſmati Eſhté was joined in the commiſſion with him.

The reaſon of this was, as I have often before obſerved, that, as the Agows are thoſe that pay the greateſt tribute in gold to the king, and furniſh the capital with all ſorts of proviſions, any calamity happening in their country is ſeverely felt by the inhabitants of Gondar; and the knowledge of this occaſions a degree of preſumption and confidence in the Agows, of which they have been very often the dupes. This, indeed, happened at this very inſtant. For Waragna and Eſhtè marched from Gondar, and with them a number of veteran troops of the king's houſehold of Maitſha, depending on Ibaba; and this army, without bringing one Galla from the other ſide of the Nile, gave Nanna Georgis and his Agows ſuch an overthrow that his clan was near-l extirpated, and many of the principal of that nation ſlain.

Nanna Georgis, who chiefly was aimed at as the author of this revolt, escaped, with great difficulty, wounded, from the field; and the feud which had long subsisted between Waragna's family and the race of the Agows, received great addition that day, and came down to their posterity, as we shall soon see by what happened in Waragna's son's time at the bloody and fatal battle of Banja.

The next affair that called the attention of government, was a complaint brought by the monks of Magwena, a ridge of rocks of but small extent not far from Tcherkin, the estate of Kasmati Netcho. These mountains, for a great part of the year, almost calcined under a burning sun, have, in several months, violent and copious showers of rain, which, received in vast caves and hollows of the mountain, and out of the reach of evaporation, are means of creating and maintaining all sorts of verdure and all scenes of pleasure, in the hot season of the year, when the rains do not fall elsewhere; and as the rocks have a considerable elevation above the level of the plain, they are at no season infected with those feverish disorders that lay the low country waste.

Netcho was a man of pleasure, and he thought, since the monks, by retiring to rocks and deserts, meant thereby to subject themselves to hardship and mortification, that these delightful and flowery scenes, the groves of Magwena, were much more suited to the enjoyment of happiness with the young and beautiful Ozoro Esther, than for any set of men, who by their austerities were at constant war with the flesh. Upon these principles, which it would be very difficult for the monks themselves to refute, he took possession of the mountain Magwena, and of those bowers that,

that, though in poſſeſſion of ſaints, did not ſeem to have been made for the ſolitary pleaſures of one ſex only. This piece of violence was, by the whole body of monks, called Sacrilege. Violent excommunications, and denunciations of divine vengeance, were thundered out againſt Kaſmati Netcho. An army was ſent againſt him; he was defeated and taken priſoner, and confined upon a mountain in Walkayt, where ſoon after he died, but not before the Iteghè had ſhewn her particular mark of diſpleaſure, by taking her daughter Ozoro Eſther, his wife, from him, that ſhe, too, and her only ſon Confu, might not be involved in the monk's excommunications, and the imputed crime of ſacrilege.

At this time died Kaſmati Waragna, full of years and glory, having, though a ſtranger, preſerved his allegiance to the laſt, and more than once ſaved the ſtate by his wiſdom, bravery, and activity. He is almoſt a ſingle example in their hiſtory, of a great officer, governor of a province, that never was in rebellion, and a remarkable inſtance of Bacuffa's penetration, who, from a ſingle converſation with him, while engaged in the vileſt employment, choſe him as capable of the greateſt offices, in which he uſefully ſerved both his ſon and grandſon.

Soon after, Ayo governor of Begemder, an older officer ſtill than Waragna, arrived in Gondar, and reſigned his government into the queen's hands. This reſignation was received, becauſe it was underſtood that it was directly to be conferred upon his ſon Mariam Barea, by far the moſt hopeful young Abyſſinian nobleman of his time. Another mark of favour, ſoon followed, perhaps was the occaſion of this.

Ozoro

Ozoro Eſther, the very young widow of Netcho, was married, very much againſt her own conſent, to the young governor of Begemder, and this marriage was crowned with the univerſal applauſe of court, town, and country; for Mariam Barea poſſeſſed every virtue that could make a great man popular; and it was impoſſible to ſee Ozoro Eſther, and hear her ſpeak, without being attached to her for ever after.

Still the complaint remained, that there was no promotion, no diſtinction of merit, but through ſome relation to the queen-mother; and the truth of this was ſoon ſo apparent, and the diſcontent it occaſioned ſo univerſal, that nothing but the great authority Ras Welled de l'Oul, the Iteghé's brother, poſſeſſed, could hinder this concealed fire from breaking out into a flame.

The queen, mother to Joas, was Ozoro Wobit, a Galla. Upon Joas's acceſſion to the throne, therefore, a large body of Galla, ſaid to be 1200 horſe, were ſent as a preſent to the young king as the portion of his mother. A number of private perſons had accompanied theſe; part from curioſity, part from deſire of preferment, and part from attachment to thoſe that were already gone before them. Theſe laſt were formed into a body of infantry of 600 men, and the command given to a Galla, whoſe name was Wooſheka; ſo that the regency, in the perſon of the queen, ſeemed to have gained freſh force from the minority of the young king Joas, as yet perfectly ſubject to his mother.

There were four bodies of houſehold troops abſolutely devoted to the king's will. One of theſe, the Koccob horſe,

was commanded by a young Armenian not 30 years of age. He had been left in Abyſſinia by his father in Yaſous's time, and care had been taken of him by the Greeks. Yaſous had diſtinguiſhed him by ſeveral places while a mere youth, and employed him in errands to Maſuah and Arabia, by which he became known to Ras Michael. Upon the death of Yaſous, the Iteghè put him about her grandſon Joas, as Baalomal, which is, *gentleman of the bed-chamber*, or, *companion to the king*. He then became Afaleffa el Camiſha, which means *groom of the ſtole*, but at laſt was promoted to the great place of Billetana Gueta Dakakin, *chamberlain*, or *maſter of the houſehold*, the third poſt in government, by which he took place of all the governors of provinces while in Gondar.

THERE is no doubt Joas would have made him Ras, if he had reigned as long as his father. Beſides his own language, he underſtood Turkiſh, Arabic, and Malabar, and was perfect maſter of the Tigrè. But his great excellence was his knowledge of Amharic, which he was thought to ſpeak as chaſtely and elegantly as Ras Michael himſelf. He is reported likewiſe to have poſſeſſed a ſpecies of juriſprudence, whence derived I never knew, which ſo pleaſed the Abyſſinians, that the judges often requeſted his attendance on the king; at which time he ſat at the head of the table, where it is ſuppoſed the king would place himſelf did he appear perſonally in judgment, (which, as it may be learned from divers places in this hiſtory, he never does); certain mornings in the week, therefore, he ſat publicly in the market-place, and gave judgment ſoon after the break of day.

I saw this young man with his father at Loheia. He underſtood no European language; was juſt then returned from India, and had a conſiderable quantity of diamonds, and other precious ſtones, to ſell. He ſpoke with tears in his eyes of Abyſſinia, from which he was baniſhed, and urged that I ſhould take him there with me. But I had too much at ſtake to charge myſelf with the conſequences of anybody's behaviour but my own, and therefore refuſed it.

The great favour the Galla were in at court encouraged many of their countrymen to follow them; and, by the king's deſire, two of his uncles were ſent for, and they not only came, but brought with them a thouſand horſe. Theſe were two young men, brothers of the queen Wobit, juſt now dead. The eldeſt was named Brulhè, the younger Lubo. In an inſtant, nothing was heard in the palace but Galla. The king himſelf affected to ſpeak nothing elſe. He had entirely intruſted the care of his perſon to his two uncles; and, both being men of intrigue, they thought themſelves ſufficiently capable to make a party, ſupport it, and place the king at the head of it; and this they effected as ſoon as it was conceived, whilſt the Abyſſinians ſaw, with the utmoſt deteſtation and abhorrence, a Gallan and inimical government erected in the very heart or metropolis of their country.

Woodage had been long governor of Amhara. He had ſucceeded Palambaras Duré in Bacuffa's time, when he had been promoted to the dignity of Ras.

These two were heads of the only great families in Amhara, who took that government as it were by rotation. Woodage, in one of the excurſions into Atbara, had made an Arab's, or a Shepherd's daughter, priſoner, baptized her, and lived with her as his miſtreſs. The paſſion Woodage bore to this fair ſlave was not, however, reciprocal. She had fixed her affections upon his eldeſt ſon, and their frequent familiarities at laſt brought about the diſcovery. This very much ſhocked Woodage; but, inſtead of having recourſe to public juſtice, he called his brothers, and ſome other heads of his family before him, and examined into the fact with them, deſiring his ſon to defend himſelf. The crime was clearly proved in all its circumſtances. Upon which Woodage, by his own authority, condemned his ſon to death; and not only ſo, but cauſed his ſentence to be put in execution, by hanging the young man over a beam in his own houſe. As for the ſlave, he releaſed her, as not being bound to any return of affection to him, from whom ſhe had only received evil, and been deprived of her natural liberty.

It ſeems this claim of *patria poteſtas* was new in Abyſſinia; and Bacuffa took it ſo ill, that he deprived Woodage of his office, and baniſhed him to Amhara, then governed by Palambaras Durè. To this loſs of influence another circumſtance contributed. He was a relation of Yaſous's firſt wife, who, by the Iteghé's intrigues, had been ſent with her two ſons to the mountain of Wechné, and Joas, a young ſon of Yaſous, preferred in their places.

It happened that Palambaras Durè died; and as the ſucceſſion fell regularly upon the unpopular Woodage, the king's uncle, Lubo obtained a promiſe of the government

of Amhara for himſelf. All Gondar was ſhocked at this ſtrange choice: Amitzo and his Edjow were already upon the ſouthern frontiers of that province, domiciled there; and there was no doubt but this nomination would put Amhara into his poſſeſſion for ever. All the inhabitants of Gondar were ready to run to their arms to oppoſe this appointment of the king; and it was thought that, underhand, the Iteghè fomented this diſſatisfaction. The king, however, terrified by the violent reſentment of the populace, at the inſtance of Ras Welled de l'Oul, recalled his nomination.

At this time Michael, who ſaw the conſequence of theſe diſputes, but abſtained from taking any ſhare, becauſe he knew that both parties were promoting his intereſt by their mutual animoſity, came to Gondar in great pomp, upon an honourable errand.

Baady, ſon of l'Oul, king of Funge, or, as they are called in the Abyſſinian annals, Noba *, who had defeated Yaſous at Sennaar, after a tyrannical and bloody reign of thirty-three years, was depoſed in the 1764 by Naſſer his ſon, whom his miniſter Shekh Adelan, with his brother Abou Kalec, governor of Kordofan, had put in his place; and Baady had fled to Suhul Michael, whoſe fame was extended all over Atbara. Michael received him kindly, promiſed him his beſt ſervices with Joas, and that he would march in perſon to Sennaar, and reinſtate him with an army, if the king ſhould ſo command.

Michael

* Noba, in the language of Sennaar, ſignifies Soldier; it is probably from this the ancient name of Nubia firſt came.

Michael conducted him into the preſence of the king, where, in a manner unbecoming a ſovereign, and which Joas's ſucceſſor would not have permitted, he kiſſed the ground, and declared himſelf a vaſſal of Abyſſinia. The king aſſigned him a large revenue, and put him in poſſeſſion of the government of Ras el Feel upon the frontier of Sennaar, where Ras Welled de l'Oul adviſed him to wait patiently till the diſſenſions that then prevailed at court were quieted, when Michael ſhould have orders to reinſtate him in his kingdom. This was a wiſe counſel, but he to whom it was given was not wiſe, and therefore did not follow it. After ſome ſhort ſtay at Ras el Feel he was decoyed from this place of refuge by the intrigues of Adelan, and brought to truſt himſelf in Atbara, where he was betrayed and taken priſoner by Welled Haſſen, Shekh of Teawa, and murdered by him in Teawa privately, as we ſhall hereafter ſee, two years after his flight from Gondar.

At this time, Ras Welled de l'Oul's death was a ſignal for all parties to engage. Nothing had withheld them but his prudence and authority; and from that time began a ſcene of civil blood, which has continued ever ſince, was in its full vigour at the time when I was in Abyſſinia, and without any proſpect that it would ever have an end.

The great degree of power to which the brothers and their Galla arrived; the great affection the king ſhewed to them, owing to their having early infected him with their bloody and faithleſs principles, gave great alarm to the queen and her relations, whoſe influence they were every day diminiſhing. The laſt ſtroke, the death of Welled de l'Oul, ſeemed to be a fatal one, and to threaten the

entire diſſolution of her power. In order to counterbalance this, they aſſociated to their party and council Mariam Barea, who had lately married Ozoro Eſther, and was in poſſeſſion of the ſecond province in the ſtate for riches and for power, and greatly increaſed in its importance by the officer that commanded it. Upon the death of Welled de l'Oul, the principal fear the party of the Galla had was, that Mariam Barea ſhould be brought to Gondar as Ras. The union between him and Kaſmati Eſhtè, formerly as ſtrong by inclination as now it was by blood, put them in terror for their very exiſtence, and a ſtroke was to be ſtruck at all hazards that was to ſeparate theſe intereſts for ever.

Eshte, upon taking poſſeſſion of the province of Damot, found the Djawi, eſtabliſhed upon the frontiers of the province, very much inclined to revolt. Notwithſtanding peace had been eſtabliſhed among the Agows ever ſince Nanna Georgis had been defeated at the laſt battle, the Galla had ſtill continued to rob and diſtreſs them, contrary to the public faith that had been pledged to them.

Eshte was too honeſt a man to ſuffer this; but the truth was, the Djawi had felt the advantage of having a man like the late Waragna governor of Damot; and they wanted, by all means, to reduce the miniſters to the neceſſity of making that command hereditary in his family, by Faſil his ſon being preferred to ſucceed him.

This Faſil, whom I ſhall hereafter call Waragna Faſil, a name which was given to diſtinguiſh him from many other Faſils in the army, was a man then about twenty-two, whom Eſhtê

Eſhté had kept about him in a private ſtation, and had lately given him a ſubaltern command among his own countrymen, the Djawi of Damot. From the ſervices that he had then rendered, it was expected a greater preferment was to follow.

The inſolence of the Djawi had come to ſuch a pitch that they had offered Eſhté battle; but they had fled with very little reſiſtance, and been driven over the Nile to their countrymen whence they came. Eſhté, rouſed from his indolence, now ſhewed himſelf the gallant ſoldier that he really was. He croſſed the Nile at a place never attempted before; and though he loſt a conſiderable number of men in the paſſage, yet that diſadvantage was more than compenſated by the advantage it gave him of falling upon the Galla unexpectedly. He therefore deſtroyed, or diſperſed ſeveral tribes of them, poſſeſſed himſelf of their crops, drove off their cattle, wives, and children, and obliged them to ſue for peace on his own terms; and then repaſſed the Nile, re-eſtabliſhing the Djawi, after ſubmiſſion, in their ancient poſſeſſions.

Upon news of Welled de l'Oul's death, and the known intention of the queen that Eſhté ſhould ſucceed him in the office of Ras, he was muſtering his ſoldiers to march to Gondar: Damot, the Agows, Goutto, and Maitſha, all readily joined him from every quarter; and Waragna Faſil had been ſent to bring in the Djawi with the reſt. Eſhtè had marched by ſlow journies from Burè, ſlenderly attended, to arrive at Goutto the place of rendezvous; and, being come to Fagitta, in his way thither, he encamped upon a plain there, near to the church of St George.

It

It was in the evening, when news were brought him that the whole Djawi had come out, to a man, from good-will, to attend him to Gondar. This mark of kindneſs had very much pleaſed him; and he looked upon it as a grateful return for his mild treatment of them after they were vanquiſhed. A ſtool was ſet in the ſhade, without a ſmall houſe where he then was lodged, that he might ſee the troops paſs; when Hubna Faſil, a Galla, who commanded them, availing himſelf of the privilege of approaching near, always cuſtomary upon theſe occaſions, run him through the body with a lance, and threw him dead upon the ground. The reſt of the Galla fell immediately upon all his attendants, put them to flight, and proclaimed Waragna Faſil governor of Damot and the Agows.

This intelligence was immediately ſent to their countrymen, Brulhè and Lubo, at Gondar, who prevailed upon the king to confirm Waragna Faſil in his command, though purchaſed with the murder of the worthieſt man in his dominions, who was his own uncle, brother to the Iteghè; and this was thought to more than counterbalance the acceſſion of ſtrength the queen's party had received from the marriage of Ozoro Eſther with Mariam Barea.

In critical times like theſe, the greateſt events are produced from the ſmalleſt accidents. Ayo, father to Mariam Barea, had always been upon bad terms with Michael. It was at firſt emulation between two great men; but, after Ayo had aſſiſted the king in taking Michael priſoner at the mountain Samayat, this emulation had degenerated into perfect hatred on the part of Michael.

Just before Kaſmati Ayo had reſigned Begemder to his ſon, and retired to private life, two ſervants of Michael had fled with two ſwords, which they uſed to carry before him, claiming the protection of Kaſmati Ayo. Michael had claimed them before the king, who, loath to determine between the two, not being at that time inſtigated by Galla, had accepted the propoſal of Michael to have the matter of right tried before the judges; but, upon his reſignation of the province, and retiring, the thing had blown over and been forgotten.

Soon after this acceſſion of Mariam Barea, Michael intimated to him the order the king had given that the judges ſhould try the matter of difference between them. Mariam Barea refuſed this, and upbraided Michael with meanneſs and proſtitution of the dignity he bore, to conſent to ſubmit himſelf to the venal judgment of weak old men, whoſe conſciences were hackneyed in prejudice or partiality, and always known to be under the influence of party. He put Suhul Michael in mind alſo, that, being both of them the king's lieutenant-generals, repreſentatives of his perſon in the provinces they governed, noble by birth, and ſoldiers by profeſſion, they had no ſuperior but God and their ſovereign, therefore it was below them to acknowledge or receive any judgment between them unleſs from God, by an appeal to the ſword, or from the king, by a ſentence intimated to them by a proper officer; that Suhul Michael might chooſe either of theſe manners of deciding the difference as ſhould ſeem beſt unto him; and if he choſe the latter, of abiding by the ſentence of the king, he would then reſtore him the ſwords upon the king's firſt command, but he deſpiſed the judges, and diſowned their juriſdiction.

This

This ſpirited anſwer was magnified into the crime of diſobedience and rebellion. Michael purſued it no further. He knew it was in good hands, which, when once the matter was ſet agoing, would never let it drop. Accordingly, to every one's ſurpriſe but Michael's, a proclamation was made, that the king had deprived Mariam Barea of his government for diſobedience, and had given it to Kaſmati Brulhé his uncle, now governor of Begemder.

All Abyſſinia was in a ferment at this promotion. The number, power, and vicinity of that race of Galla being conſidered, this was but another way of giving the richeſt and ſtrongeſt barrier of Abyſſinia into the hands of his hereditary and bloody enemy. There could be no doubt, indeed, but that, as ſoon as Brulhè ſhould have taken poſſeſſion of his government, it would be inſtantly over-run by the united force of that ſavage and Pagan nation; and there was nothing afterwards to avert danger from the metropolis, for the boundaries of Begemder reach within a very ſhort day's journey of Gondar.

Mariam Barea, one of the nobleſt in point of birth in the country where he lived, ſetting every private conſideration aſide, was too good a citizen to ſuffer a meaſure ſo pernicious to take place quietly in his time, while the province was under his command. But, beſides this, he conſidered himſelf as degraded and materially hurt both in honour and in intereſt, and very ſenſibly felt the affront of being, himſelf and his kindred, ſubjected to a race of Pagans whom he had ſo often overthrown in the field.

The king's army marched, under the command of his uncle Brulhè, to take poſſeſſion of his government; it was with much difficulty, indeed, that Joas could be kept from appearing in perſon, but he was left under the inſpection and tuition of his uncle Lubo, at Gondar. Brulhè made very ſlow advances; his army ſeveral times aſſembled, as often diſbanded of itſelf; and near a year was ſpent before he could move from his camp on the lake Tzana, with a force capable of ſhewing or maintaining itſelf in Begemder, from the frontiers of which he was not half a day's journey.

Mariam Barea remained all this time inactive in Begemder, attending to the ordinary duties of his office, with a perfect contempt of Brulhé and his proceedings. But, in the interim, he left no means untried to pacify the king, and diſſuade him from a meaſure he ſaw would be ruinous to the ſtate in general.

Mariam Barea, though young, had the prudence and behaviour of a man of advanced years. He was eſteemed, without compariſon, the braveſt ſoldier and beſt general in the kingdom, except old Suhul Michael, his hereditary rival and enemy. But his manners were altogether different from thoſe of Michael. He was open, chearful, and unreſerved; liberal, even to exceſs, but not from any particular view of gaining reputation by it; as moderate in the uſe of victory as indefatigable to obtain it; temperate in all his pleaſures; eaſily brought to forgive, and that forgivenneſs always ſincere; a ſteady obſerver of his word, even in trifles; and diſtinguiſhed for two things very uncommon in Abyſſinia, regularity in his devotions, and conſtancy to one wife, which never was impeached. In his laſt remonſtrance, after

ter many profeſſions of his duty and obedience, he put the king in mind, that, at his inveſtiture, " The laws of " the country impoſed upon him an oath which he took " in preſence of his majeſty, and, after receiving the holy " ſacrament, that he was not to ſuffer any Galla in Begem- " der, but rather, if needful, die with ſword in hand " to prevent it; that he conſidered the contravening that " oath as a deliberate breach of the allegiance which he " owed to God and to his ſovereign, and of the truſt repo- " ſed in him by his country; that the ſafety of the princes " of the royal family, ſequeſtered upon the mountain of " Wechné, depended upon the obſervance of this oath; that " otherwiſe they would be in conſtant danger of being " extirpated by Pagans, as they had already nearly been " in former ages, at two different times, upon the rocks " Damo and Geſhen; he begged the king, if, unfortunate- " ly, he could not be reconciled to him, to give his com- " mand to Kaſmati Geta, Kaſmati Euſebius, or any Abyſ- " ſinian nobleman, in which caſe he would immediately " reſign, and retire to private life with his old father."

He concluded by ſaying, that, " As he had formed a re- " ſolution, he thought it his duty to ſubmit it to the king; " that, if his majeſty was reſolved to march and lead the army " himſelf, he would retire till he was ſtopt by the frontiers of " the Galla, and the fartheſt limits of Begemder; and, ſo far " from moleſting the army in their route, the king might " be aſſured, that, though his own men ſhould be ſtraitened, " abundance of every kind of proviſion and refreſhment " ſhould be left in his majeſty's route. But if, contrary to " his wiſh, troops of Galla, commanded by a Galla, ſhould " come to take poſſeſſion of his province, he would fight

" them

" them at the well of Fernay*, before one Galla ſhould " drink there, or advance a pike-length into Begemder."

THIS declaration was, by orders of Ras Michael, entered into the Deftar, and written in letters of gold, after Mariam Barea's death, no doubt at the inſtigation of Ozoro Eſther, jealous for the reputation of her dead huſband. It is intitled, *the dutiful declaration of the governor of Begemder;* and is ſigned by two Umbares, or judges. Whether the original was ſo or not, I cannot ſay.

THE return made to this by the king was of the harſheſt kind, full of taunts and ſcoffs, and preſumptuous confidence; announcing the ſpeedy arrival of *Brulhé*, as to a certain victory; and, to ſhew what further aſſiſtance he truſted in, he ordered Ras Michael to be proclaimed governor of Samen, the province on the Gondar ſide of the Tacazzé, that no obſtacle might be left in the way of that general from Tigrè, if it ſhould be reſolved upon to call him.

IN Abyſſinia there is a kind of glaſs bottle, very light, and of the ſize, ſhape, and ſtrength of a Florence wine-flaſk; only the neck is wider, like that of our glaſs decanters, twiſted for ornament ſake, and the lips of it folded back, ſuch as we call cannon-mouthed. Theſe are made at Trieſte on the Adriatic; and thouſands of packages of theſe are brought from Arabia to Gondar, where they are in uſe for all liquors, which are clear enough to bear the glaſs, ſuch as wine and ſpirits. They are very thin

* A well near Karoota, immediately on the frontiers of Begemder.

thin and fragil, and are called *brulhé*. Mariam Barea, provoked at being ſo undervalued as he was in the king's meſſage, returned only for anſwer, "Still the king had bet-
"ter take my advice, and not ſend his *brulhé's* here; they
"are but weak, and the rocks about Begemder hard; at
"any rate, they do right to move ſlowly, otherwiſe they
"might break by the way."

As ſoon as this defiance was reported to the king and his counſellors all was in a flame, and orders given to march immediately. The whole of the king's houſehold, conſiſting of 8000 veteran troops, were ordered to join the army of Brulhè. This, tho' it added to the diſplay of the army, contributed nothing to the real ſtrength of it; for all, excepting the Galla, were reſolved neither to ſhed their own blood nor that of their brethren, under the banners of ſo deteſted a leader.

This was not unknown to Mariam Barea; but neither the advantage of the ground, the knowledge of Brulhè's weakneſs, nor any other conſideration, could induce him to take one ſtep, or harraſs his enemy, out of his own province; nor did he ſuffer a muſket to be fired, or a horſe to charge, till Brulhè's van was drawn up on the brink of the well Fernay. After he had placed the horſe of the province of Laſta oppoſite to the Edjow Galla, againſt whom his deſign was, the armies joined, and the king's troops immediately gave way. The Edjow, however, engaged fiercely and in great earneſt with the horſe of Laſta, an enemy fully as cruel and ſavage as themſelves, but much better horſemen, better armed, and better ſoldiers. The moment the king's troops turned their backs, the trumpets from Mariam Barea's army forbade the purſuit; while the reſt of the

Begemder horſe, who knew the intention of their general, ſurrounded the Edjow, and cut them to pieces, though valiantly fighting to the laſt man.

Brulhe fell, among the herd of his countrymen, not diſtinguiſhed by any action of valour. Mariam Barea had given the moſt expreſs orders to take him alive; or, if that could not be, to let him eſcape; but by no means to kill him. But a menial ſervant of his, more willing to revenge his maſter's wrongs than adopt his moderation, forced his way through the crowd of Galla, where he ſaw Brulhè fighting; and, giving him two wounds through his body with a lance, left him dead upon the field, bringing away his horſe along with him to his maſter as a token of his victory. Mariam Barea, upon hearing that Brulhè was dead, foreſaw in a moment what would infallibly be the conſequence, and exclaimed in great agitation, "Michael and all the army of Tigrè will march againſt me before autumn."

He was not in this a falſe prophet; for no ſooner was Brulhè's defeat and death known, than the king, from reſentment, fear the fatal ruler of weak minds, the conſtant inſtigation of Lubo, and the remnant of Brulhè's party, declared there was no ſafety but in Ras Michael. An expreſs was therefore immediately ſent to him, commanding his attendance, and conferring upon him the office of Ras, by which he became inveſted with ſupreme power, both civil and military. This was an event Michael had long wiſhed for. He had nearly as long foreſeen that it muſt happen, and would involve both king and queen, and their reſpective parties, equally in deſtruction; but he had not ſpent his

time merely in reflection, he had made every preparation poſſible, and was ready. So ſoon then as he received the king's orders, he prepared to march from Adowa with 26,000 men, all the beſt ſoldiers in Abyſſinia, about 10,000 of whom were armed with firelocks.

It happened that two Azages, and ſeveral other great officers, were ſent to him into Tigré with theſe orders, and to inveſt him with the government of Samen. Upon their mentioning the preſent ſituation of affairs, Michael ſharply reflected upon the king's conduct, and that of thoſe who had counſelled him, which muſt end in the ruin of his family and the ſtate in general. He highly extolled Mariam Barea as the only man in Abyſſinia that knew his duty, and had courage to perſevere in it. As for himſelf, being the king's ſervant, he would obey his commands, whatever they were, faithfully, and to the letter; but, as holding now the firſt place in council, he muſt plainly tell him the ruin of Mariam Barea would be ſpeedily and infallibly followed by that of his country.

After this declaration, Michael decamped with his army encumbered by no baggage, not even proviſions, women, or tents, nor uſeleſs beaſts of burden. His ſoldiers, attentive only to the care of their arms, lived freely and licentiouſly upon the miſerable countries through which they paſſed, and which they laid wholly waſte as if belonging to an enemy.

He advanced, by equal, ſteady, and convenient marches, in diligence, but not in haſte. Not content with the ſubſiſtance of his troops, he laid a compoſition of money upon

all thoſe diſtricts within a day's march of the place through which he paſſed; and, upon this not being readily complied with, he burnt the houſes to the ground, and ſlaughtered the inhabitants. Woggora, the granary of Gondar, full of rich large towns and villages, was all on fire before him; and that capital was filled with the miſerable inhabitants, ſtript of every thing, flying before Ras Michael as before an army of Pagans. The king's underſtanding was now reſtored to him for an inſtant.; he ſaw clearly the miſchief his warmth had occaſioned, and was truly ſenſible of the raſh ſtep he had taken by introducing Michael. But the dye was caſt; repentance was no longer in ſeaſon; his all was at ſtake, and he was tied to abide the iſſue.

Michael, with his army in order of battle, approached Gondar with a very warlike appearance. He deſcended from the high lands of Woggora into the valleys which ſurround the capital, and took poſſeſſion of the rivers Kahha and Angrab, which run through theſe valleys, and which alone ſupply Gondar with water. He took poſt at every entrance into the town, and every place commanding thoſe entrances, as if he intended to beſiege it. This conduct ſtruck all degrees of people with terror, from the king and queen down to the loweſt inhabitant. All Gondar paſſed an anxious night, fearing a general maſſacre in the morning; or that the town would be plundered, or laid under ſome exorbitant ranſom, capitation, or tribute.

But this was not the real deſign of Michael; he intended to terrify, but to do no more. He entered Gondar early in the morning, and did homage to the king in the moſt reſpectful manner. He was inveſted with the charge of Ras by

Joas himſelf; and from the palace, attended by two hundred ſoldiers, and all the people of note in the town, he went ſtraight to take poſſeſſion of the houſe which is particularly appropriated to his office, and ſat down in judgment with the doors open.

MARAUDING parties of ſoldiers had entered at ſeveral parts of the town, and begun to uſe that licence they had been accuſtomed to on their march, pilfering and plundering houſes, or perſons that ſeemed without protection. Upon the firſt complaints, as he rode through the town, he cauſed twelve of the delinquents to be apprehended, and hanged upon trees in the ſtreets, ſitting upon his mule till he ſaw the execution performed. After he had arrived at his houſe, and was ſeated, theſe executions were followed by above fifty others in different quarters of Gondar. That ſame day he eſtabliſhed four excellent officers in four quarters of the town. The firſt was Kefla Yaſous, a man of the greateſt worth, whom I ſhall frequently mention as a friend in the courſe of my hiſtory; the ſecond, Billetana Gueta Welleta Michael, that is, firſt maſter of the houſehold to the king. He had given that old officer that office, upon ſuperſeding Lubo the king's uncle, without any conſent aſked or given. He was a man of a very moroſe turn, with whom I was never connected. The third was Billetana Gueta Tecla, his ſiſter's ſon, a man of very great worth and merit, who had the ſoft and gentle manners of Amhara joined to the determined courage of the Tigran.

MICHAEL took upon himſelf the charge of the fourth diſtrict. He did not pretend by this to erect a military go-

vernment in Gondar; on the contrary, theſe officers were only appointed to give force to the ſentences and proceedings of the civil judges, and had not deliberation in any cauſe out of the camp. But two Umbares, or judges, of the twelve were obliged to attend each of the three diſtricts; two were left in the king's houſe, and four had their chamber of judicature in his.

The citizens, upon this fair aſpect of government, where juſtice and power united to protect them, diſmiſſed all their fears, became calm and reconciled to Michael the ſecond day after his arrival, and only regretted that they had been in anarchy, and ſtrangers to his government ſo long.

The third day after his arrival he held a full council in preſence of the king. He ſharply rebuked both parties in a ſpeech of conſiderable length, in which he expreſſed much ſurpriſe, that both king and queen, after the experience of ſo many years, had not diſcovered that they were equally unfit to govern a kingdom, and that it was impoſſible to keep diſtant provinces in order, when they paid ſuch inattention to the police of the metropolis. Great part of this ſpeech applied to the king, who, with the Iteghè and Galla, were in a balcony as uſual, in the ſame room, though at ſome diſtance, and above the table where the council ſat, but within convenient hearing.

The troubled ſtate, the deſtruction of Woggora, and the inſecurity of the roads from Damot, had made a famine in Gondar. The army poſſeſſed both the rivers, and ſuffered no ſupply of water to be brought into the town, but allow-

ed two jars for each family twice a-day, and broke them when they returned for more*.

Ras Michael, at his riſing from council, ordered a loaf of bread, a brulhè of water, and an ounce of gold, all articles portable enough to be expoſed in the market-place, upon the head of a drum, without any apparent watching. But tho' the Abyſſinians are thieves of the firſt rate, tho' meat and drink were very ſcarce in the town, and gold ſtill ſcarcer, though a number of ſtrangers came into it with the army, and the nights were almoſt conſtantly twelve hours long, nobody ventured to attempt the removing any of the three articles that, from the Monday to the Friday, had been expoſed night and day in the market-place unguarded.

All the citizens, now ſurrounded with an army, found the ſecurity and peace they before had been ſtrangers to, and every one deprecated the time when the government ſhould paſs out of ſuch powerful hands. All violent oppreſſors, all thoſe that valued themſelves as leaders of parties, ſaw, with an indignation which they durſt not ſuffer to appear, that they were now at laſt dwindled into abſolute inſignificance.

Having ſettled things upon this baſis, Ras Michael next prepared to march out for the war of Begemder; and he ſummoned, under the ſevereſt penalties, all the great officers to attend him with all the forces they could raiſe. He inſiſted

*This is commonly done in times of trouble, to keep the townſmen in awe, as if fire was intended, which would not be in their power to quench.

inſiſted likewiſe that the king himſelf ſhould march, and refuſed to let a ſingle ſoldier ſtay behind him in Gondar; not that he wanted the aſſiſtance of thoſe troops, or truſted to them, but he ſaw the deſtruction of Mariam Barea was reſolved on, and he wiſhed to throw the odium of it on the king. He affected to ſay of himſelf, that he was but the inſtrument of the king and his party, and had no end of his own to attain. He expatiated, upon all occaſions, upon the civil and military virtues of Mariam Barea; ſaid, that he himſelf was old, and that the king ſhould walk coolly and cautiouſly, and conſider the value that officer would be of to his poſterity and to the nation when he ſhould be no more.

Upon the firſt news of the king's marching, Mariam Barea, who was encamped upon the frontiers near where he defeated Brulhé, fell back to Garraggara the middle of Begemder. The king followed with apparent intention of coming to a battle without loſs of time; and Mariam Barea, by his behaviour, ſhewed in what different lights he viewed an army, at the head of which was his ſovereign, and one commanded by a Galla.

No ſuch moderation was ſhewn on the king's part. His army burnt and deſtroyed the whole country through which they paſſed. It was plain that it was Joas's intention to revenge the death of Brulhé upon the province itſelf, as well as upon Mariam Barea. As for Ras Michael, the behaviour of the king's army had nothing in it new, or that could either ſurpriſe or diſpleaſe him. Friend as he was to peace and good order at home, his invariable rule was to indulge his

his ſoldiers in every licence that the moſt profligate mind could wiſh to commit when marching againſt an enemy.

It was known the armies were to engage at Nefas Muſa, becauſe Mariam Barea had ſaid he would fight Brulhé, to prevent him entering the province, but retreat before the king till he could no longer avoid going out of it. The king then marched upon the tract of Mariam Barea, burning and deſtroying on each ſide of him, as wide as poſſible, by detachments and ſcouring parties. Allo Faſil, an officer of the king's houſehold, a man of low birth, of very moderate parts, and one who uſed to divert the king as a kind of buffoon, otherwiſe a good ſoldier, had, as a favour, obtained a ſmall party of horſe, with which he ravaged the low country of Begemder.

The reader will remember, in the beginning of this hiſtory, that a ſingular revolution happened, in as ſingular a manner, the uſurper of the houſe of Zaguè having voluntarily reſigned the throne to the kings of the line of Solomon, who for ſeveral hundred years had been baniſhed to Shoa. Tecla Haimanout, founder of the monaſtery of Debra Libanos, a ſaint, and the laſt Abyſſinian that enjoyed the dignity of Abuna, had the addreſs and influence to bring about this revolution, or reſignation, and to reſtore the ancient line of kings. A treaty was made under guarantee of the Abuna, that large portions of Laſta ſhould be given to this prince of the houſe of Zaguè, free from all tribute, tax, or ſervice whatever, and that he ſhould be regarded as an independent prince. The treaty being concluded, the prince of Zagué was put in poſſeſſion of his lands, and was called Y'Laſta Hatzè, which ſignifies, not the king of Laſta, but *the king*

at

at or in Lasta*. He resigned the throne, and Icon Amlac of the line of Solomon, by the queen of Saba, continued the succession of princes of that house.

That treaty, greatly to the honour of the contracting parties, made towards the end of the 13th century, had remained inviolate till the middle of the 18th; no affront or injustice had been offered to the prince of Zagué, and in the number of rebellions which had happened, by princes setting up their claims to the crown, none had ever proceeded, or in any shape been abetted, by the house of Zagué, even though Lasta had been so frequently in rebellion.

As Joas was a young prince, now for the first time in the province of Begemder and passing not far from his domains, the prince of Zaguè thought it a proper civility and duty to salute the king in his passage, and congratulate him upon his accession to the throne of his father. He accordingly presented himself to Joas in the habit of peace, while, according to treaty, his kettle-drums, or nagareets, were silver, and the points of his guard's spears of that metal also. The king received him with great cordiality and kindness; treated him with the utmost respect and magnificence; refused to allow him to prostrate himself on the ground, and forced him to sit in his presence. Michael went still farther; upon his entering his tent he uncovered himself to his waist, in the same manner as he would have done in presence of Joas. He received him standing, obliged him to sit in his own

* Nearly the same distinction as the silly one made in Britain between the French king and king of France.

own chair, and excuſed himſelf for uſing the ſame liberty of ſitting, only on account of his own lameneſs.

The king halted one entire day to feaſt this royal gueſt. He was an old man of few words, but thoſe very inoffenſive, lively, and pleaſant; in ſhort, Ras Michael, not often accuſtomed to fix on favourites at firſt ſight, was very much taken with this Laſta ſovereign. Magnificent preſents were made on all ſides; the prince of Zagué took his leave and returned; and the whole army was very much pleaſed and entertained at this ſpecimen of the good faith and integrity of their kings.

He had now conſiderably advanced through his own country, Laſta, which was in the rear, when he was met by Allo Faſil returning from his plundering the low country, who, without provocation, from motives of pride or avarice, fell unawares upon the innocent, old man, whoſe attendants, ſecure, as they thought, under public faith, and accoutred for parade and not for defence, became an eaſy ſacrifice, the prince being the firſt killed by Allo Faſil's own hand.

Fasil continued his march to join the king, beating his ſilver kettle-drums as in triumph. The day after, Ras Michael, uninformed of what had paſſed, inquired who that was marching with a nagareet in his rear? as it is not allowed to any other perſon but governors of provinces to uſe that inſtrument; and they had already reached the camp. The truth was preſently told; at which the Ras ſhewed the deepeſt compunction. The tents were already pitched when Faſil arrived, who, riding into Michael's

tent, as is uſual with officers returning from an expedition, began to brag of his own deeds, and upbraided Michael, in a ſtrain of mockery, that he was old, lame, and impotent.

This raillery, though very common on ſuch occaſions, was not then in ſeaſon; and the laſt part of the charge againſt him was the moſt offenſive, for there was no man more fond of the ſex than Michael was. The Ras, therefore, ordered his attendants to pull Faſil off his horſe, who, ſeeing that he was fallen into a ſcrape, fled to the king's tent for refuge, with violent complaints againſt Michael. The king undertook to reconcile him to the Ras, and ſent the young Armenian, commander of the black horſe, to deſire Michael to forgive Allo Faſil. This he abſolutely refuſed to do, alledging, that the paſſing over Faſil's inſolence to himſelf would be of no uſe, as his life was forfeited for the death of the prince of Zagué.

The king renewed his requeſt by another meſſenger; for the Armenian excuſed himſelf from going, by ſaying boldly to the king, That, by the law of all nations, the murderer ſhould die. To the ſecond requeſt the king added, that he required only his forgivenneſs of his inſolence to him, not of the death of the prince of Zagué, as he would direct what ſhould be done when the neareſt of kin claimed the ſatisfaction of retaliation. To this Ras Michael ſhortly replied, "I am here to do juſtice to every one, and will do it without any conſideration or reſpect of perſons." And it was now, for the firſt time, Abyſſinia ever ſaw a king ſolicit the life of a ſubject of his own from one of his ſervants, and be refuſed.

The

The king, upon this, ordered Allo Faſil to defend himſelf; and things were upon this footing, the affair likely to end in oblivion, though not by forgiveneſs. But, a very ſhort time after, the prince of Zaguè's eldeſt ſon came privately to Michael's tent in the night; and, the next morning, when the judges were in his tent, Michael ſent his door-keeper (Hagos) reckoned the braveſt and moſt fortunate in combat of any private man in the army, and to whom he truſted the keeping of his tent-door, to order Allo Faſil to anſwer at the inſtance of the prince of Zaguè, then waiting him in court, Why he had murdered the prince his father? Faſil was aſtoniſhed, and refuſed to come: being again cited in a regular manner by Hagos, he ſeemed deſirous to avail himſelf of the king's permiſſion to defend himſelf, and call together his friends. Hagos, without giving him time, thruſt him through with a lance; then cut off his head, and carried it to Michael's tent, repeating what paſſed, and the reaſon of his killing him.

As a refuſal in all ſuch inſtances is rebellion, this had paſſed according to rule: a party of Tigrans was ordered to plunder his tent; and all the ill-got ſpoils which he had gained from the poor inhabitants of Begemder were abandoned to the ſoldiers. Faſil's head was given to the prince of Zaguè, as a reparation for the treaty being violated; the ſilver nagareet and ſpears were returned; and, highly as this affair had been carried by Ras Michael, the king never after mentioned a word of it. But this was univerſally allowed to be the firſt cauſe of their diſagreement.

Mariam Barea, ſeeing no other way to ſave his province from ruin but by bringing the affair to a ſhort iſſue, re-

ſolved likewiſe to keep his promiſe. He retired to Nefas Muſa, and encamped in the fartheſt limits of his province: behind this are the Woollo Galla, relations of Amitzo the king's parents. Joas and Ras Michael followed him without delay, and, having called in all the out-poſts, both ſides prepared for an engagement.

About nine in the morning, Mariam Barea preſented his army in order of battle. Michael had given orders to Kefla Yaſous and Welleta Michael how to form his. He then mounted his mule, and with ſome of his officers rode out to view Mariam Barea's diſpoſition. The king, anxious about the fortune of the day, and terrified at ſome reports that had been made him, by timid or unſkilful people, of the warlike countenance of Mariam Barea's army, ſent to the Ras, whom he ſaw reconnoitring, to know his opinion of what was likely to happen. "Tell the king," ſays the veteran, "that a young man like him, fighting with a ſubject ſo infinitely below him, with an army double his number, ſhould give him fair play for his life and reputation. He ſhould ſend to Mariam Barea to encreaſe the ſtrength of his center by placing the troops of Laſta there, or we ſhall beat him in half an hour, without either honour to him or to ourſelves." The king, however, did not underſtand that ſort of gallantry; he thought half an hour in ſuſpence was long enough, and he ordered immediately a large body of muſquetry to reinforce Faſil, who commanded the center, and thereby he weakened his own right wing.

Michael, who commanded the right of the royal army, had placed himſelf and his fire-arms in very rough ground, where cavalry could not approach him, and where he fired

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as from a citadel, and ſoon obliged the left wing of the rebels to retreat. But the king, Kefla Yaſous, and Lubo on the right, were roughly handled by the horſe of Laſta, and would have been totally defeated, the king and Lubo having already left the field, had not Kefla Yaſous brought up a reinforcement of the men of Sirè and Temben, and retrieved the day, at leaſt brought things upon an equal footing.

Fasil, with the horſe of Foggora and Damot, and a prodigious body of the Djawi and Pagan Galla, deſirous to ſhew his conſequence, and confirm himſelf in his ill-got government by his perſonal behaviour, attacked the Begemder horſe in the center ſo irreſiſtibly, that he not only broke through them in ſeveral places, but threw the whole body into a ſhameful flight. Mariam Barea himſelf was wounded in endeavouring to ſtop them, and hurried away, in ſpite of his inclination, crying out in great agony, "Is there not one in my army that will ſtay and ſee me die like the ſon of Kaſmati Ayo?" It was all in vain; Powuſſen, and a number of his own officers, ſurrounding him, dragged him as it were by force out of the field. The country behind Nefas Muſa is wild, and cut with deep gullies, and the woods almoſt impenetrable; they were therefore quickly out of the enemy's purſuit, and ſafe, as they thought, under the protection of the Woollo Galla. The whole army of Begemder was diſperſed, and Michael early forbade further purſuit.

The account of this battle, and what preceded it, from the murder of the prince of Zaguè, is not in the annals or hiſtory of Abyſſinia, which I have hitherto followed; at leaſt it has

has not appeared yet, probably out of delicacy to Ozoro Eſther, fear of Ras Michael, and reſpect to the character of Mariam Barea, whoſe memory is ſtill dear to his country. But the whole was often, at my deſire, repeated to me by Keſla Yaſous, and his officers who were there, whom he uſed to queſtion about any circumſtance he did not himſelf remember, or was abſent from; for he was a ſcrupulous lover of truth; and nothing pleaſed him ſo much as the thought that I was writing his hiſtory to be read in my country, although he had not the ſmalleſt idea of England or its ſituation.

As for the converſation before the battle, it was often told me by Ayto Aylo and Ayto Engedan, ſons of Kaſmati Eſhté, who were with the Ras when he delivered the meſſage to the king, and were kept by him from engaging that day in reſpect to Mariam Barea, who was married to their aunt Ozoro Eſther.

The king and Lubo ſent Wooſheka to their friends among the Woollo, who delivered up the unfortunate Mariam Barea, with twelve of his officers who had taken refuge with him. Mariam Barea was brought before the king in his tent, covered with blood that had flowed from his wound; his hands tied behind his back, and thus thrown violently with his face to the ground. A general murmur which followed ſhewed the ſentiments of the ſpectators at ſo woful a ſight; and the horror of it ſeemed to have ſeized the king ſo entirely as to deprive him of all other ſentiments.

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I HAVE often ſaid, the Moſaical law, or law of retaliation, is conſtantly obſerved over all Abyſſinia as the criminal law of the country, ſo that, when any perſon is ſlain wrongfully by another, it does not belong to the king to puniſh that offence, but the judges deliver the offender to the neareſt relation of the party murdered, who has the full power of putting him to death, ſelling him to ſlavery, or pardoning him without any ſatisfaction.

LUBO ſaw the king relenting, and that the greateſt crime, that of rebellion, was already forgiven. He ſtood up, therefore, and, in violent rage, laid claim to Mariam Barea as the murderer of his brother: the king ſtill ſaying nothing, he and his other Galla hurried Mariam Barea to his tent, where he was killed, according to report, with ſundry circumſtances of private cruelty, afterwards looked upon as great aggravations. Lubo, with his own hand, is ſaid to have cut his throat in the manner they kill ſheep. His body was afterwards disfigured with many wounds, and his head ſevered and carried to Michael, who forbade uncovering it in his tent. It was then ſent to Brulhé's family in their own country, as a proof of the ſatisfaction his friends had obtained; and this gave more univerſal umbrage than did even the cruelty of the execution.

SEVERAL officers of the king's army, ſeeing the bloody intentions of the Galla, adviſed Powuſſen, and the eleven other officers that were taken priſoners, to make the beſt uſe of the preſent opportunity, and fly to the tent of Michael and implore his protection. This they moſt willingly did, with the connivance of Wooſheka, who had been intruſted with the care of them, and Lubo having

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finiſhed Mariam Barea, came to the king's tent to ſeek the unhappy priſoners, whom he intended as victims to the memory of Brulhè likewiſe. Hearing, however, that they were fled to Michael's tent, he ſent Wooſheka to demand them; but that officer had ſcarce opened his errand, in the gentleſt manner poſſible, when Michael, in a fury, cried out, Cut him in pieces before the tent-door. Wooſheka was indeed lucky enough to eſcape; but we ſhall find this was not forgot, for his puniſhment was more than doubled ſoon afterwards.

At ſeeing Mariam Barea's head in the hands of a Galla, after forbidding him to expoſe it in his tent, Michael is ſaid to have made the following obſervation: "Weak and cowardly people are always in proportion cruel and unmerciful. If Brulhè's wife had done this, I could have forgiven her; but for Joas, a young man and a king, whoſe heart ſhould be opened and elated with a firſt victory, to be partaker with the Galla, the enemies of his country, in the murder of a nobleman ſuch as Mariam Barea, it is a prodigy, and can be followed by no good to himſelf or the ſtate; and I am much deceived if the day is not at hand when he ſhall curſe the moment that ever Galla croſſed the Nile, and look for a man ſuch as Mariam Barea, but he ſhall not find him." And, indeed, Michael was very well entitled to make this prophecy, for he knew his own heart, and the deſigns he had now ready to put in execution.

It is no wonder that theſe free communications gave the king reaſon to diſtruſt Michael. And it was obſerved that Waragna Faſil had inſinuated himſelf far into his favour: his late behaviour at the battle of Nefas Muſa had

greatly increaſed his importance with the king; and the number of troops he had now with him made Joas think himſelf independent of the Ras. Faſil had brought with him near 30,000 men, about 20,000 of whom were horſemen, wild Pagan Galla, from Bizamo and other nations ſouth of the Nile. The terror the ſavages occaſioned in the countries through which they paſſed, and the great diſorders they committed, gave Ras Michael a pretence to inſiſt that all thoſe wild Galla ſhould be ſent back to their own country. I ſay this was a pretence, becauſe Michael's ſoldiers were really more cruel and licentious, becauſe more confident and better countenanced than theſe ſtrangers were. But the war was over, the armies to be diſbanded, theſe Pagans were conſequently to return home; and they were all ſent back accordingly, excepting 12,000 Djawi, men of Faſil's own tribe, and ſome of the beſt horſe of Maitſha, Agow, and Damot.

This was the firſt appearance of quarrel between Faſil and Ras Michael. But other accidents followed faſt that blew up the flame betwixt them; of which the following was by much the moſt remarkable, and the moſt unexpected.

At Nefas Muſa, near to the field of battle, was a houſe of Mariam Barea, which he uſed to remove to when he was buſy in wars with the neighbouring Galla. It was ſurrounded with meadows perfectly well-watered, and full of luxuriant graſs. Faſil, for the ſake of his cavalry, had encamped in theſe meadows; or, if he had other views, they are not known; and though all the doors and entrances of the houſe were ſhut, yet within was the unfortunate

Ozoro Eſther, by this time informed of her huſband's death, and with her was Ayto Aylo, a nobleman of great credit, riches, and influence. He had been at the campaign of Sennaar, and was ſo terrified at the defeat, that, on his return, he had renounced the world, and turned monk. He was a man of no party, and refuſed all poſts or employments; but was ſo eminent for wiſdom, that all ſides conſulted him, and were in ſome meaſure governed by him.

This perſon, a relation of the Iteghé's, had, at her deſire, attended Ozoro Eſther to Nefas Muſa, but, adhering to his vow, went not to battle with her huſband. Hearing, however, of the bad diſpoſition of the king, the cruelty of the Galla, and the power and ambition of Faſil, whoſe ſoldiers were encamped round the houſe, he told her that there was only one reſolution which ſhe could take to avoid ſudden ruin, and being made a ſacrifice to one of the murderers of her huſband.

This princeſs, under the faireſt form, had the courage and deciſion of a Roman matron, worthy the wife of Mariam Barea, to whom ſhe had born two ſons. Inſtructed by Aylo, early in the morning, all covered from head to foot, accompanied by himſelf, and many attendants and friends, their heads bare, and without appearance of diſguiſe, they preſented themſelves at the door of Michael's tent, and were immediately admitted. Aylo announced the princeſs to the Ras, and ſhe immediately threw herſelf at his feet on the ground.

As Michael was lame, tho' in all other reſpects healthy and vigorous, and unprepared for ſo extraordinary an interview,

it was ſome time before he could get upon his feet and uncover himſelf before his ſuperior. This being at laſt accompliſhed, and Ozoro Eſther refuſing to riſe, Aylo, in a few words, told the Ras her reſolution was to give him inſtantly her hand, and throw herſelf under his protection, as that of the only man not guilty of Mariam Barea's death, who could ſave her and her children from the bloody cruelty and inſolence of the Galla that ſurrounded her. Michael, ſanguine as he was in his expectations of the fruit he was to reap from his victory, did not expect ſo ſoon ſo fair a ſample of what was to follow.

To decide well, inſtantly upon the firſt view of things, was a talent Michael poſſeſſed ſuperior to any man in the kingdom. Tho' Ozoro Eſther had never been part of his ſchemes, he immediately ſaw the great advantage which would accrue to him by making her ſo, and he ſeized it; and he was certain alſo that the king, in his preſent diſpoſition, would ſoon interfere. He lifted Ozoro Eſther, and placed her upon his ſeat; ſent for Keſla Yaſous and his other officers, and ordered them, with the utmoſt expedition, to draw up his army in order of battle, as if for a review to aſcertain his loſs. At the ſame time he ſent for a prieſt, and ordered ſeparate tents to be pitched for Ozoro Eſther and her houſehold. All this was performed quickly; then meeting her with the prieſt, he was married to her at the door of his own tent in midſt of the acclamations of his whole army. The occaſion of theſe loud ſhouts was ſoon carried to the king, and was the firſt account he had of this marriage. He received the information with violent diſpleaſure, which he could not ſtifle, or refrain from expreſſing it in the ſevereſt terms, all of which were carried to Ras Michael by officious

perſons, almoſt as ſoon as they were uttered, nothing ſoftened.

The conſequences of the marriage of Ozoro Eſther were very ſoon ſeen in the inveterate and determined hatred againſt the Galla. Eſther, who could not ſave Mariam Barea, ſacrificed herſelf that ſhe might avenge his death, and live to ſee the loſs of her huſband expiated by numberleſs hecatombs of his enemies and murderers. Mild, gentle, and compaſſionate as, from my own knowledge, ſhe certainly was, her nature was totally changed when ſhe caſt back her eyes upon the ſufferings of her huſband; nor could ſhe be ever ſatiated with vengeance for thoſe ſufferings, but conſtantly ſtimulated Ras Michael, of himſelf much inclined to bloodſhed, to extirpate, by every poſſible means, that odious nation of Galla, by whom ſhe had fallen from all her hopes of happineſs.

Fasil, as being a Galla, the firſt man that broke thro' the horſe of Begemder, and wounded and put to flight her huſband Mariam Barea, was in conſequence among the black liſt of her enemies. Faſil, too, had murdered Kaſmati Eſhté, who was her favourite uncle, faſt friend to Mariam Barea, and the man that had promoted her marriage with him.

The great credit of Faſil with the king had now given Ras Michael violent jealouſy. Theſe cauſes of hatred accumulated every day, ſo that Michael had already formed a reſolution to deſtroy Faſil, even though the king ſhould periſh with him. In theſe ſentiments, too, was Guſho of Amhara, a man of great perſonal merit, of whoſe father, Ras Woodage, we have already ſpoken, who had filled ſucceſſive-

ly all the great offices in the laſt reign. He was immenſely rich; had married a daughter of Ras Michael, and afterwards ſix or ſeven other women, being much addicted to the fair ſex, and was lately married to Ozoro Welleta Iſrael, the Iteghé's daughter. Nor was he in any ſhape an enemy to wine; but very engaging, and plauſible in diſcourſe and behaviour; in many reſpects a good officer, careful of his men, but ſaid to be little ſolicitous about his word or promiſe to men of any other profeſſion but that of a ſoldier.

An accident of the moſt trifling kind brought about an open breach between the king and the Ras, which never after was healed. The weather was very hot while the army was marching. One day, a little before their arrival at Gondar, in paſſing over the vaſt plain between the mountains and the lake Tzana, (afterwards the ſcene of much bloodſhed) Ras Michael, being a little indiſpoſed with the heat, and the ſun at the ſame time affecting his eyes, which were weak, without other deſign than that of ſhading them, had thrown a white cloth or handkerchief over his head. This was told the king, then with Faſil in the center, who immediately ſent to the Ras to inquire what was the meaning of that novelty, and upon what account he preſumed to cover his head in his preſence? The white handkerchief was immediately taken off, but the affront was thought ſo heinous as never after to admit of atonement.

It muſt be here obſerved, that, when the army is in the field, it is a diſtinction the king uſes, to bind a broad fillet of fine muſlin round his head, which is tied in a double knot, and hangs in two long ends behind. This, too, is worn by the governor of a province when he is firſt introduced into

into it; and, in abſence of the king, is the mark of ſupreme power, either direct or delegated, in the perſon that wears it.

Unless on ſuch occaſions, no one covers his head in preſence of the king, nor in ſight of the houſe or palace where the king reſides: But it was not thought, that, being at ſuch a diſtance in the rear, he was in the king's preſence, nor that what was cauſed by infirmity was to be conſtrued into preſumption, or weighed by the nice ſcale of jealous prerogative.

The armies returned to the valleys below Gondar, and encamped ſeparately there, Faſil upon the river Kahha, and Ras Michael on the Angrab. Guſho was on the right of Michael and left of Faſil, a little higher up the Kahha, near Koſcam, the Iteghè's palace; but he was on the oppoſite ſide of the river from Faſil, where he had a houſe of his own, and ſeveral large meadows adjoining. Guſho's ſervants and ſoldiers now began cutting their maſter's graſs, and were ſoon joined by a number of Faſil's people, who fell, without ceremony, to the ſame employment. An interruption was immediately attempted, a fray enſued, and ſeveral were killed or wounded on both ſides, but at laſt Faſil's people were beat back to their quarters.

Gusho complained to Ras Michael of this violation of his property; and he being now in Gondar, and holding the office of Ras, was, without doubt, the ſuperior and regular judge of both, as they were both out of their provinces, and immediately in Michael's. Upon citation, Faſil declared that he would ſubmit to no ſuch juriſdiction; and,

and, the caſe being referred to the judges next day, it was found unanimouſly in council, that Ras Michael was in the right, and that Faſil was guilty of rebellion. A proclamation in conſequence was made at the palace-gate, ſuperſeding Faſil in his government of Damot, and in every other office which he held under the king, and appointing Boro de Gago in his place, a man of great intereſt in Damot and Gojam, and with the Galla on both ſides of the Nile, and married to a ſiſter of Kaſmati Eſhté's, by another mother, otherwiſe a man of ſmall capacity.

Fasil, after a long and private audience of the king in the night, decamped early in the morning with his army, and ſat down at Azazo, the high road between Damot and Gondar, and there he intercepted all the proviſions coming from the ſouthward to the capital.

It happened that the houſe in Gondar, where Ras Michael lived, was but a ſmall diſtance from the palace, a window of which opened ſo directly into it, that Michael, when ſitting in judgment, could be diſtinctly ſeen from thence. One day, when moſt of his ſervants had left him, a ſhot was fired into the room from this window of the palace, which, though it miſſed Michael, wounded a dwarf, who was ſtanding before him fanning the flies from off his face, ſo grievouſly, that the page fell and expired at the foot of his maſter. This was conſidered as the beginning of the hoſtilities. Nobody knew from whoſe hand the ſhot came; but the window from which it was aimed ſufficiently ſhewed, that if it was not by direction, it muſt at leaſt have been fired with the knowledge of the king.

Joas

Joas loſt no time, but removed and encamped at Tedda, and ſent Wooſheka to Michael with orders to return to Tigrè, and not to ſee his face; and, at the ſame time, declared Lubo governor of Begemder and Amhara. The Ras ſcarcely could be brought to ſee Wooſheka; but did not deign to give any further anſwer than this, "That the king "ſhould know, that the proper perſons to correſpond with "him as Ras, upon the affairs of the kingdom, were the "judges of the town, or of the palace; not a ſlave like "Wooſheka, whoſe life, as well as that of all the Gallas in "the king's preſence, was forfeited by the laws of the "land. He cautioned him from appearing again in his "preſence, for if he did, that he ſhould ſurely die."

The next day a meſſage came from the king, by four judges, forbidding the Ras again to drink of either the Angrab or the Kahha, but to ſtrike his tents and return to Tigré upon pain of incurring his higheſt diſpleaſure.—To this Michael anſwered, "That, true it was, his province was "Tigrè, but that he was now governor of the whole realm; "that he was an extraordinary officer, called to prevent the "ruin of the country, becauſe, confeſſedly, the king could "not do it; that the reaſon of his coming exiſted to that "day; and he was very willing to ſubmit it to the judges "for their ſolemn opinion, whether the kingdom, at pre-"ſent in the hands of the Galla, was not in more danger "from the power of thoſe Galla than it was from the con-"ſtitutional influence of Mariam Barea. He added, that he "expected the king ſhould be ready to march againſt Faſil, "for which purpoſe he was to decamp on the morrow." The king returned an abſolute refuſal to march: The Ras thereupon made proclamation for all the Galla, of every denomination,

mination to leave the capital, the next day, upon pain of death, declaring them outlawed, and liable to be ſlain by the firſt that met them, if, after twenty-four hours, they were found in Gondar or its neighbourhood, or, after ten days, in any part of the kingdom. After this, accompanied by Guſho, he decamped to diſlodge Faſil from the ſtrong poſt which he held at Azazo.

By the king's refuſal to march with Ras Michael in perſon, it was ſuppoſed that his houſehold troops would not join, but remain with him to garriſon his palace. Joas, however, was too far decided in favour of Faſil to remain neuter. Michael had encamped the 21ſt of April in the evening, on the ſide of the hill above Azazo, in very rough and rocky ground, as unfavourable for Faſil's horſe as the ſlope it had was favourable for Michael's muſquetry.

The battle was fought on the 22d in the morning, and there was much blood ſhed for the time that it laſted. A nephew of Michael, and his old Fit-Auraris, Netcho, were both ſlain, and Faſil was totally defeated. The Galla, who had come from the other ſide of the Nile, were very much terrified at Michael's fire-arms, which contained what they called the zibib, or grape, meaning thereby the ball. Faſil retired quickly to Damot, to increaſe and collect another army again, and to try his fortune after the rains.

It happened, unfortunately, that among the priſoners taken at Azazo were ſome of the king's black horſe. Theſe being his ſlaves, and ſubject only to his commands, ſufficiently ſhewed by whoſe authority they came there. They were, therefore, all called before Michael; two of them were

firſt interrogated, whether the king had ſent them or not? and, upon their denying or refuſing to give an anſwer, their throats were cut before their companions. The next queſtioned was a page of the king, who ſeeing, from the fate of his friends, what was to follow his denial, frankly told the Ras, that it was by the king's ſpecial orders they, and a conſiderable body of the houſehold troops, had joined Faſil the night before; and further, that it was the Armenian, who, by the king's order, had fired at him, and killed the dwarf who was fanning the flies from him.

Upon this information all the priſoners were diſmiſſed. The army returned the ſame night to Gondar, and, though they had been faſting all day, a council was held, which ſat till very late, at the riſing of which a meſſenger was diſpatched to Wechné for Hatzé Hannes, who was brought to the foot of the mountain the next day. In the ſame night Shalaka Becro, Nebrit Tecla and his two ſons, Lika Netcho and his two ſons, and a monk of Tigrè, called Welleta Chriſtos, were ſent to the palace to murder the king, which they eaſily accompliſhed, having found him alone. They buried him in the church of St Raphael, as we ſhall find from the regicide's own confeſſion, when he was apprehended, when we ſhall relate the particulars.

At the ſame time Michael exhibited a ſtrange contraſt in his behaviour to the Armenian, who had fled to the houſe of the Abuna for refuge. He ſent and took him thence, and baniſhed him from Abyſſinia, but ſo conſiderately, that he diſpatched a ſervant with him to Maſuah to furniſh him with neceſſaries, to ſee him embark, and ſave him from the cruelty and extortions of the Naybe.

HANNES

HANNES II.
1769.

Hannes, Brother to Bacuffa, choſen King---Is brought from Wechné---Crowned at Gondar---Refuſes to march againſt Faſil---Is poiſoned by Order of Ras Michael.

HANNES, a man paſt ſeventy years of age, made his entry into Gondar the 3d of May 1769. He was brother to Bacuffa, and having in his time eſcaped from the mountain, and being afterwards taken, his hand was cut off by order of the king his brother, and he was ſent back to the place of his confinement.

It is a law of Abyſſinia, as we have already obſerved, derived from that of Moſes, that no man can be capable either of the throne or prieſthood, unleſs he be perfect in all his limbs; the want of a hand, therefore, certainly diſqualified Hannes, and it was with that intent it had been cut off. When this was objected to him in council, Michael laughed violently, and turned it into ridicule; "What is it that a "king has to do with his hands? Are you afraid he ſhall "not be able to ſaddle his own mule, or load his own bag-

"gage? Never fear that; when he is under any ſuch diffi-
"culty, he has only to call upon me *, and I will help
"him."

HANNES, beſides his age, was very feeble in body; and having had no converſation but with monks and prieſts, this had debilitated his mind as much as age had done his body. He could not be perſuaded to take any ſhare in government. The whole day was ſpent in pſalms and prayers; but Ras Michael had brought from the mountain with him two ſons, Tecla Haimanout the eldeſt, a prince of fifteen years of age, and the younger, called George, about thirteen.

GUEBRA DENGHEL, a nobleman of the firſt family in Tigré had married a daughter of Michael by one of his wives in that province. By her he had one daughter, Welleta Selaſſé, whom Michael in the beginning, while Joas and he were yet friends, had deſtined to be queen, and to be married to him. Hannes was of the age only to need a Shunnamite; and Welleta Selaſſé, young and beautiful, and who merited to be ſomething more, was deſtined as this ſacrifice to the ambition of her grandfather. A kind of marriage, I believe, was therefore made, but never conſummated. She lived with Hannes ſome months in the palace, but never took any ſtate upon her. She was a wife and a queen merely in name and idea. Love had in that frozen compoſition as little ſhare as ambition, and thoſe two great temptations,

* What made the ridicule here was, Michael was older than the king, and could not ſtand alone.

temptations, a crown and a beautiful miſtreſs, could not animate Hatzé Hannes to take the field to defend them. Every poſſible method was taken by Michael to overcome his reluctance, and do away his fears. All was vain; he wept, hid himſelf, turned monk, demanded to be ſent again to Wechné, but abſolutely refuſed marching with the army.

Michael, who had already ſeen the danger of leaving a king behind him while he was in the field, and finding Hannes inexorable, had recourſe to poiſon, which was given him in his breakfaſt; and the Ras, by this means, in leſs than ſix months became the deliberate murderer of two kings.

TECLA HAIMANOUT II.
1769.

Succeeds his Father Hannes—His Character and prudent Behaviour—Cultivates Michael's Friendſhip—Marches willingly againſt Faſil—Defeats him at Fagitta—Deſcription of that Battle.

TECLA HAIMANOUT ſucceeded his father. He was a prince of a moſt graceful figure, tall for his age, rather thin, and of the whiteſt ſhade of Abyſſinian colour, ſuch are all

all thoſe princes that are born in the mountain. He was not ſo dark in complexion as a Neapolitan or Portugueze, had a remarkably fine forehead, large black eyes, but which had ſomething very ſtern in them, a ſtraight noſe, rather of the largeſt, thin lips, and ſmall mouth, very white teeth and long hair. His features, even in Europe, would have been thought fine. He was particularly careful of his hair, which he dreſſed in a hundred different ways. Though he had been abſent but a very few months from his native mountain, his manners and carriage were thoſe of a prince, that from his infancy had ſat upon an hereditary throne. He had an excellent underſtanding, and prudence beyond his years. He was ſaid to be naturally of a very warm temper, but this he had ſo perfectly ſubdued as ſcarcely ever to have given an inſtance of it in public. He entered into Ras Michael's views entirely, and was as forward to march out againſt Faſil, as his father had been averſe to it.

From the time of Hannes's acceſſion to the throne, Tecla Haimanout called Michael by the name of Father, and during the few ſlight ſickneſſes the Ras had, he laid by all his ſtate, and attended him with an anxiety well becoming a ſon. At this time I entered Abyſſinia, and arrived in Maſuah, where there was a rumour only of Hatzé Hannes's illneſs.

The army marched out of Gondar on the 10th of November 1769, taking the route of Azazo and Dingleber. Faſil was at Buré, and had aſſembled a large army from Damot, Agow, and Maitſha. But Welleta Yaſous, his principal officer, had brought together a ſtill larger one, from the wild nations of

Galla beyond the Nile, and this not without ſome difficulty. The zibib, or bullet, which had deſtroyed ſo many of them at Azazo, had made an impreſſion on their minds, and been reported to their countrymen as a circumſtance very unpleaſing. Theſe wild Pagans, therefore, had, for the firſt time, found a reluctance to invade their ancient enemies the Abyſſinians.

Fasil, to overcome this fear of the zibib, had loaded ſome guns with powder, and fired them very near at ſome of his friends, which of courſe had hurt nobody. Again he had put ball in his gun, and fired at cattle afar off; and theſe being for the moſt part ſlightly wounded, he inferred from thence that the zibib was fatal only at a diſtance, but that if they galloped reſolutely to the mouth of the gun, the grape could do no more than the firſt gun he fired with powder had done to thoſe he had aimed at.

As ſoon as Faſil heard that Michael was on his march, he left Burè and advanced to meet him, his wiſh being to fight him if poſſible, before he ſhould enter into thoſe rich provinces of the Agows, from whence he drew the maintenance of his army, and expected tribute. Michael's conduct warranted this precaution. For no ſooner had he entered Faſil's government, than he laid waſte all Maitſha, deſtroying every thing with fire and ſword. The old general indeed being perfectly acquainted with the country, and with the enemy he was to engage, had already fixed upon his field of battle, and meaſured the ſtations that would conduct him thither.

Instead of taking up the time with ſpreading the deſolation he had begun, after the firſt two days, by forced marches he came to Fagitta, conſiderably earlier than Faſil expected. This field that Michael had choſen, was rocky, uneven, and full of ravines in one part, and of plain ſmooth turf on the other, which diviſions were ſeparated by a brook full of large ſtones.

The Nile was on Ras Michael's left, and in this rugged ground he ſtationed his lances and muſquetry; for he never made great account of his horſe. Two large churches, St Michael and St George, planted thick with cedars, and about half a mile diſtant from each other, were on his right and left flanks, or rather advanced farther before his front. A deep valley communicated with the moſt level of theſe plains, deſcending gently all the way from the celebrated ſources of the Nile, which were not more than half a day's journey diſtant. Michael drew up his army behind the two churches, which were advanced on his right and left flanks, and among the cedars of theſe he planted 500 muſqueteers before each church, whom the trees perfectly concealed; he formed his horſe in front, knowing them to be an object the Galla did not fear, and likely to lead them on to charge raſhly. Theſe he gave the command of to a very active and capable officer, Powuſſen of Begemder, one of thoſe eleven ſervants of Mariam Barea, whoſe lives Michael ſaved, by protecting them in his tent after the battle of Nefas Muſa. He had directed this officer, with a few horſe, to ſcour the ſmall plain, as ſoon as he ſaw the Galla advancing into it from the valley.

As ſoon as the ſun became hot, Faſil's wild Galla poured into the plain, and they had now occupied the greateſt part of it, which was not large enough to contain his whole army, when their ſkirmiſhing began by their driving Powuſſen before them, who fled apparently in great confuſion, croſſed the brook, and joined the horſe, and formed nearly between the churches. The Galla, deſirous to purſue, were impeded by the great ſtones, ſo that they were in a crowd at the paſſage of the brook.

Ayto Welleta Gabriel, factor to Ozoro Eſther, was intoxicated with liquor, but he was a brave man, very active and ſtrong, and of a good underſtanding, though, according to a cuſtom among them, he, at times, to divert the Ras, played the part of a buffoon. In this character, with his muſquet only in his hand, he, though on foot, ſkirmiſhed in the middle of a party of Powuſſen's horſe. When they turned to fly, Welleta Gabriel found it convenient to do ſo likewiſe, and he croſſed the brook without looking behind him. Upon turning round, he ſaw the Galla halt, as if in council, in the bed of the rivulet, and taking up his gun as a bravado, he levelled at the crowd, and had the fortune to hit the principal man among them, who fell dead among the feet of the horſes.

A small pauſe enſued; the cry of the Zibib! the Zibib! immediately began, and a downright confuſion and flight followed. The Galla, already upon the plain, turned upon thoſe coming out of the valley, and theſe again upon their companions behind them. The cry of Zibib Ali*! Zibib Ali!

* They have the grape along with them.

Ali! was repeated through the whole, ſpreading terror and diſmay wherever it was heard. Nobody knew what was the misfortune that had befallen them. Welleta Yaſous, who commanded the van, was carried away by the multitude flying: Faſil, who was at the head of the Damot and Agows, had not entered the valley, nor could any one tell him what was the accident in the plain.

Even Michael himſelf, (as I have heard him ſay) when, ſitting upon his mule on a ſmall eminence, he ſaw this extraordinary confuſion and retreat, was not able to aſſign any cauſe for it. Though no man on theſe occaſions had more preſence of mind, he remained for a time motionleſs, without giving any orders. The troops, however, that lay hid in the groves of cedars before the churches, who had been ſilent and attentive, and Powuſſen, who commanded the horſe which had been ſkirmiſhing, ſaw diſtinctly the operation of Welleta Gabriel, and the confuſion that had followed it; without loſs of time they attacked the Galla in the valley, and were ſoon joined by Guſho and the reſt of the army.

Fasil, in deſpair at a defeat of which he knew not the cauſe, came down among the Galla, fighting very bravely, often facing about upon thoſe that preſſed them, and endeavouring at leaſt to retreat in ſome ſort of order; but the muſqueteers from the church, commanded by Hezekias, inſtead of entering the valley, had advanced and aſcended the hills, ſo that from the ſides of them, in the utmoſt ſecurity, they poured down ſhot upon the fliers beneath them.

Fasil here loſt a great part of his army; but ſeeing a place in one of the hills acceſſible, he left the valley, and aſcended the ſide of the mountain, leading a large body of his own troops; and, having gained the ſmooth ground behind the muſqueteers, he came up with them, whilſt intent only upon annoying the Galla, and cut 300 to pieces. Content with this advantage, and finding his army entirely diſperſed, he paſſed the ſources of the Nile at Geeſh, deſcended into the plain of Aſſoa, and encamped near Gooderoo, a ſmall lake there, intending to paſs the night, and collect his ſcattered forces.

Michael's army had given over purſuit, but Powuſſen, with ſome choſen horſe of Laſta and Begemder, followed Faſil upon his track, and came up with him a little before the duſk of the evening, on the ſide of the lake. Here a great ſlaughter of wounded and weary men enſued: Faſil fled, and no reſiſtance was attempted, and the ſoldiers, ſatiated with blood, at laſt returned, and purſued the enemy no further.

It was the next day in the evening before Powuſſen joined the camp, having put to the ſword, without mercy, all the ſtragglers that fell in the way upon his return. The appearance of this man and his behaviour made Michael's joy complete, who already had begun to entertain fears that ſome untoward accident had befallen him.

This was the battle of Fagitta, fought on the 9th of December 1769, on the very ground in which Faſil, juſt five years before, had murdered Kaſmati Eſhté. Thoſe philoſophers, who diſclaim the direction of a divine Providence,

will calculate how many chances there were, that, in a kingdom as big as Great Britain, the commiſſion of a crime and its puniſhment ſhould both happen in one place, on one day, in the ſhort ſpace of five years, and in the life of one man.

The extraordinary ſeverity exerciſed upon the army of the Galla, after the battle, was ſtill as apparent as it had been in the flight. Wooſheka, of whom we have had already occaſion to ſpeak, fell in among the horſe of Powuſſen and Guſho, and being known, his life was ſpared. He was couſin-german to Lubo, but a better man and ſoldier than his relation, and, in all the intrigues of the Galla at Gondar, was conſidered as an undeſigning man, of harmleſs and inoffenſive manners. He had been companion of Guſho, and many of the principal commanders in the army, and, after the defeat at Nefas Muſa, had the guard of Powuſſen and the eleven officers, whom he ſuffered to eſcape into Michael's tent, as I have already ſaid, while Lubo was murdering Mariam Barea. He had been, for a time, well known and well eſteemed by Ras Michael, nor was he ever ſuppoſed perſonally to have offended him, or given umbrage to any one. As he was a man of ſome fortune and ſubſtance, it was thought the forfeiture of all that he had might more than atone for any fault that he had ever committed.

It was therefore agreed on the morning after Powuſſen's return from the purſuit, that Guſho and he, when they ſurrendered this priſoner, ſhould aſk his life and pardon from the Ras, and this they did, proſtrating themſelves in the humbleſt manner with their foreheads on the earth. Ras Michael,

Michael, at once forgetting his own intereſt, and the quality and conſequence of the officers before him, fell into a violent and outrageous paſſion againſt the ſupplicants, and, after a very ſhort reproof, ordered each of them to their tents in a kind of diſgrace.

He then ſternly interrogated Wooſheka, whether he did not remember that, at Tedda, he had ordered him out of the country in ten days? then, in his own language of Tigré, he aſked, if there was any one among the ſoldiers that could make a leather bottle? and being anſwered in the affirmative, he ordered one to be made of Wooſheka's ſkin, but firſt to carry him to the king. The ſoldiers underſtood the command, though the miſerable victim did not, and he was brought to the king, who would not ſuffer him to ſpeak, but waved with his hand to remove him; and they accordingly carried him to the river ſide, where they flayed him alive, and brought his ſkin ſtuffed with ſtraw to Ras Michael.

It was not doubted that Ozoro Eſther, then in the camp, had ſealed the fate of this wretched victim. She appeared that night in the king's tent dreſſed in the habit of a bride, which ſhe had never before done ſince the death of Mariam Barea. Two days after, having obtained her end, ſhe returned triumphant to Gondar, where Providence viſited her with diſtreſs in her own family, for the hardneſs of her heart to the ſufferings of others.

During this time I was at Maſuah, where, by reaſon of the great diſtance and interruption in the roads, theſe tranſ-

actions were not yet known. Hatzé Hannes was ſtill ſuppoſed alive, and my errand from Metical Aga that of being his Phyſician. I ſhall now begin an account of what paſſed at Maſuah, and thence continue my journey to Gondar till my meeting with the king there.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.